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ABSTRACT

Application review is the most important part of the Department of Education's funding process and is designed to ensure that projects are worthwhile and that awards are fair and impartial. The critical step in application review is competitive, objective evaluation by reviewers. This workbook was developed by the Department of Education to clarify reviewers' responsibilities and to sharpen their review skills in order to improve the quality of the application reviews. The workbook provides guidelines for: (1) understanding the application-review process and the reviewer's role and responsibilities; (2) comprehending the roles of other personnel; (3) reading and analyzing applications more efficiently; (4) applying selection criteria while reviewing an application; (5) writing detailed comments about an application's strengths and weaknesses; (6) scoring applications correctly; and (7) serving on a panel. A glossary is included. (LMI)

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ED 400 610

Reviewing Applications for Discretionary Grants and Cooperative Agreements:

A Workbook for Application Reviewers

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EA 025 003

REVIEWING APPLICATIONS FOR DISCRETIONARY GRANTS AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS: A WORKBOOK FOR APPLICATION REVIEWERS

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OCTOBER 1991

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Introduction

Application review is the most important part of the Department of Education's funding process and is designed to ensure that projects are worthwhile and that awards are fair and impartial. The critical step in application review is competitive, objective evaluation by reviewers like yourself, who are carefully chosen for their expertise and ability to assess a proposed project's quality. Because your reviews are the foundation for higher-level decisions, the Department has developed this workbook to clarify your responsibilities and sharpen your review skills. The workbook is intended both to make your task easier and to improve the quality of application reviews.

Workbook Objectives

When you have completed the workbook, you will be able to:

1) Understand the application review process and your role and responsibilities as a reviewer;

2) Comprehend the roles of other personnel;

3) Read and analyze applications more efficiently;

4) Apply selection criteria in reviewing an application;

5) Write detailed comments about an application's strengths and weaknesses;

6) Score applications correctly; and

7) Serve on a panel.

Workbook Contents

Used in its entirety, the workbook provides a comprehensive orientation to application review. Although the Department urges all reviewers to complete or at least read through the whole workbook, you may prefer to focus on the sections most relevant to your own needs. If you have never reviewed applications before, the workbook offers general information and skill-building exercises. If you are an experienced reviewer, you can use the workbook to answer specific questions, refresh your memory, or refine your skills. The table of contents will direct you to the information you need.

The workbook contains three modules:

Module I: The Process of Grant Application Review and the Key Personnel Involved;

Module II: Understanding Selection Criteria;

Module III: Writing Comments, Scoring, and Team Skills.

Module I explains the purpose of the review process, provides an overview of the process, and describes the roles of personnel directly involved in the process.

Module II focuses on the selection criteria used in evaluating applications and the importance of using good reading and analytical skills. Tips for both skills are provided. The discussion of each criterion is followed by an exercise designed to give you practice in assessing an application's response to that criterion.

Module III describes the Technical Review Form that you will use and discusses how to write comments, score applications, and participate in panel review. The latter three sections include practice exercises. A glossary of key terms is also provided at the end of the workbook. Terms included in the glossary are printed in bold type the first time they appear in the workbook.

Using the Workbook

Because the workbook is designed to be self-instructional, you may not need to complete all of the exercises provided. The workbook is meant to be a practical tool. Reviewers who complete the workbook as part of a formal orientation session, however, will be expected to complete exercises as directed by the orientation trainer.

Please use this workbook and keep it as a general reference guide to application review. Whether you use it on your own or as part of a Department orientation session, you should feel free to make notes in the margins. If you have questions that are not answered by the workbook, do not hesitate to ask your program office contact or orientation trainer for clarification. Also, the workbook may be supplemented with program-specific guidelines and instructions. Be sure to read these as well before beginning to review applications.

MODULE I:

The Process of Grant Application Review and the Key Personnel Involved

A. The Purpose of the Review Process

Background

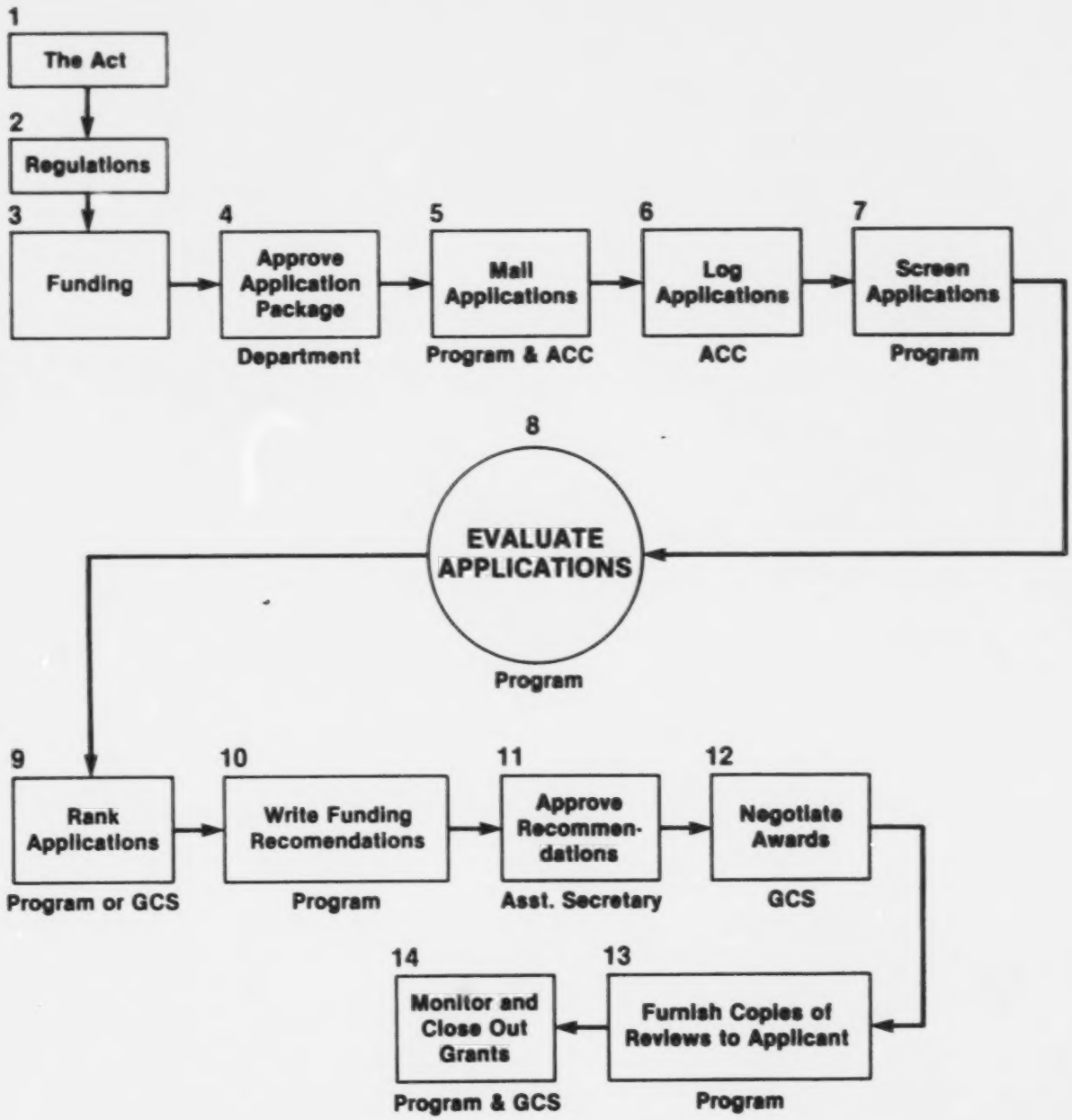
The Department of Education was established in May of 1980 to consolidate Federal education **programs** under a single agency. The Department's purpose is to promote national education policy as determined by Congress, while enabling State and local governments to exercise their constitutional right to set specific educational objectives. In accordance with Federal legislation, the Secretary of Education determines the general educational priorities for each fiscal year, and these priorities are monitored by a framework of program offices within the Department. Program offices are empowered to award Federal monies set aside by Congress to fund **projects** that further legislated educational objectives.

Purpose

Program offices are responsible for identifying projects that best address the specific educational needs targeted by legislation. To accomplish this task, they rely on a process of review that permits all eligible institutions to submit applications and compete for available funding. A certain percentage of such funding is awarded in the form of **discretionary grants** and **cooperative agreements**. For the purposes of this workbook, discretionary grants and cooperative agreements will be referred to collectively as grants because they are reviewed in the same manner. The difference between the two funding modes does not affect your role as a reviewer.

The application review process combines an initial, objective evaluation by **reviewers** with internal evaluation by program staff to arrive at a comprehensive and impartial assessment of a proposed project's likelihood of furthering legislated educational priorities. Outside review is based on the Education Department General Administrative Regulations **(EDGAR)** and any specific program regulations and provides program offices with ranked applications. The review process ensures that funded projects not only serve the purposes outlined by national education policy, but are best qualified to do so.

DISCRETIONARY GRANT AND COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT CYCLE



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B. An Overview of the Review Process

The diagram to your left illustrates the 14 steps of the review process. Each step in the diagram is numbered to correspond to the steps listed in the discussion below.

Step 1

Discretionary grants and cooperative agreements have their genesis in Congressional education acts, as do all funding methods used by the Department.

Step 2

The Department establishes regulations that govern how each act's objectives are to be carried out.

Step 3

Congress appropriates funds, and the Department conducts a process designed to award those funds.

Step 4

The Department establishes a schedule of awards and approves an application package for each funding program.

Step 5

A notice that the program is accepting applications is published in the Federal Register, listing submission deadlines as well as application requirements. The appropriate program office is also listed and undertakes responsibility for printing and mailing out application packages as they are requested. Application packages include a letter that outlines the legislative purposes that must be addressed by the proposed project, a list of the criteria that will be used in evaluating an application and how they will be scored, and the necessary application forms. (Because applicants draft their applications in conformance with the **selection criteria**, your understanding of and attention to those same criteria are essential.)

Step 6

Completed applications are sent to the Department, where their receipt is officially logged by the Department's Application Control Center (ACC). The ACC returns to applicants any applications that have been rejected because they were submitted after the published deadline.

Step 7

The program office screens timely applications for eligibility and conformity to the general administrative regulations governing Department programs and selects application reviewers.

Step 8

Applications enter the evaluation phase and are assessed by reviewers like yourself. Reviewers' assessments are entered onto a **Technical Review Form**. Some applications may only be read by individual reviewers; their reviews are collected by the program office. In other cases, reviewers will convene as a **panel** to discuss their reviews.

Step 9

The program office receives reviewers' written evaluations, verifies their adequacy, and averages the points assigned by reviewers to establish an average for each application as well as a rank order of all applications. The Department's Grants and Contracts Service (GCS) office has a standardized-score software package that can be used to make statistical adjustments to compensate for the various scoring patterns among reviewers. If the program office wishes, GCS can use this package to rank the applications.

Step 10

The program office reviews the applications again, in order of rank, and prepares written funding recommendations.

Step 11

The Assistant Secretary of the program office reviews the program office recommendations, checks the adequacy of documentation supporting the recommendations, and approves a final list, or slate, of recommended projects and funding amounts.

Step 12

GCS receives the list of recommended projects and negotiates the final funding level for each. GCS then notifies the Office of Legislation, which notifies Congress and successful applicants of the funds awarded and issues the awards. After all awards have been issued, the program office notifies applicants whose applications have been rejected.

Step 13

The program office distributes copies of reviewers' evaluations to applicants who request them. EDGAR regulations entitle all applicants to receive such copies, but although a list of all the reviewers' names is furnished, evaluations are not attributed to specific reviewers.

Step 14

The program office and GCS monitor awarded grants until they are completed and then close them out.

The review process is carefully designed to build to a decision, allowing a maximum of input that is both expanded and refined at each successive level. Application review is the essential step in the process. Although the number of review stages should ensure that each application is accurately evaluated, your review has a major impact on final funding recommendations.

C. A Description of the Roles of Personnel Directly Involved in the Review Process

As the previous section notes, the review process involves a number of personnel. Reviewers may not work directly with these personnel, but each one is involved at some point with reviewers' evaluations. A better understanding of their roles, therefore, may help you to define your own responsibilities.

KEY PERSONNEL

- Grants Officer
- Program Officer
- Panel Manager/Chairperson
- Reviewer

Grants Officer

Field reviewers who are not asked to review applications onsite will have little or no contact with Department personnel, except by correspondence or telephone. These reviewers will deal directly with program office staff, who will answer their questions and refer them to other Department personnel if necessary. Many reviewers, however, will be asked to serve at a designated review site and will participate in a training and orientation session. A **Grants Officer** from the Grants and Contracts Service office, which supervises the negotiation and administration of Department grants, will participate in this orientation, conducted by the program staff.

The role of the Grants Officer is to interpret grants management policies to reviewers/panelists and to resolve any conflicts that may arise over questions of policy. The Grants Officer does not provide input into application review, but is involved as an adviser. If present during a panel discussion, the Grants Officer may be called upon to explain, as appropriate, the key provisions of EDGAR as well as the issues of confidentiality and conflict of interest.

The Grants Officer is a major information resource for reviewers. During the final stage of grant negotiation, the Grants Officer will review your comments to assist in negotiating funding levels and any substantive changes needed in the proposed project.

MODULE I: A Description of the Roles of Personnel Directly Involved in the Review Process

Program Officer

Whether you read applications in Washington, D.C., or in the field, you will interact with a **Program Officer**. This individual is a member of the program's professional staff whose role is to advise reviewers about program regulations and to explain the following:

- Review process;
- Selection criteria;
- Reviewers' responsibilities; and
- Technical Review Forms.

While you may serve on a panel of reviewers, Program Officers do not serve as panelists but are present as facilitators of the process. They are not allowed to comment on applications, discuss the prior history of the applicant, or divulge their personal opinion or analysis. They will, however, mediate the panel review to ensure that each application is thoroughly and fairly assessed. They will also check all Technical Review Forms for adequacy and accuracy and request additional documentation, if necessary, before the panel is dismissed. After reviews are completed, Program Officers use reviewers' comments to prepare a summary recommendation for each application.

Panel Manager/Chairperson

Reviewers who serve as panelists will also encounter a **Panel Manager** or **Chairperson**, although this role is often undertaken by a Program Officer. Panel Managers do not participate in panel review, except to stress fair review. Panel Managers are responsible for panel logistics, distributing supplies and applications, monitoring the progress of individual reviews, and fostering panel discussion of the application. They can also answer procedural questions and direct reviewers to appropriate personnel regarding travel and other administrative matters.

Reviewer

Reviewers are selected by program offices on the basis of their general and specialized experience in a program area. Reviewers are expected to draw upon their expertise in evaluating applications according to the selection criteria announced by the program office. The review process involves many stages of sifting and weighing, but the reviewer is the primary source of objective assessment and bears a large responsibility for making accurate evaluations. Reviewers provide input that is different than the analysis made by program officers.

The purpose of your review is to provide a specific overall recommendation that is supported by documentation drawn directly from the application. You must always be conscious that your evaluations will form the basis of recommendations made at higher levels of review.

Because your evaluations may also be made available to applicants upon request at the close of the review process, you should be careful to avoid disparaging language in your comments and focus instead on constructive criticism that could benefit denied applicants who may wish to reapply at a later date.

Any personal knowledge you might have about a particular applicant should be suppressed in the interest of objectivity, and any personal opinions or feelings about a proposed project should be actively ignored unless they relate directly to the announced selection criteria. Similarly, you must base your evaluations solely on information provided in the application, without assuming greater knowledge on the part of the applicant or filling in gaps from your own personal knowledge. Under no circumstances will you contact an applicant for clarifying information.

Panel Discussion: A panel discussion may supplement your individual review. The program office may determine the need for panel discussion in advance because of the importance or magnitude of the award being offered, or it may decide upon panel discussion during the evaluation process if reviewers' individual evaluations exhibit a wide disparity of scores. Panel discussion usually involves three or more application reviewers and is supervised by a Panel Manager who facilitates the process.

The purpose of panel discussion is to allow for a thorough discussion of an application. If asked to serve on a panel, you must be prepared to substantiate your written evaluations orally and to discuss applications objectively. Individual ratings are discussed in turn so that all panel reviewers have the opportunity to reconsider their evaluations. General consensus is not, however, the objective; discussion is intended to stimulate the thinking of the panel by allowing different viewpoints to interact and generate deeper understanding. Panel discussion is only meant to ensure that an application's particular strengths and weaknesses have been duly noted by the reviewers and that reviewers are satisfied with their final evaluations. Reviewers who wish to change their original evaluations after consideration may do so, as long as they provide a reason for the change.

Confidentiality: At no time when reviewing applications, or after, will you discuss the applications, comments, recommendations, evaluations, review scores, names of applicants, or names of other reviewers with anyone not involved in the review process. Even discussion with other panelists is proscribed outside the panel meeting room. Applications are submitted to the Department in confidence, and you must respect that confidentiality. Reviewers' comments enjoy a similar confidentiality and review forms are never distributed to applicants before reviewers' names are deleted. A list of reviewers' names may be furnished, however, if requested.

CONFIDENTIALITY

- Do not discuss applications with others.
- Do not remove applications from the review location.

Conflict of Interest: The Department also requires reviewers to notify the Department of any finanical interest they have in any application in the competition. Program offices screen reviewers and applications before distribution to ensure that no pending application involves a reviewer; a reviewer's spouse; a profit or nonprofit organization for which the reviewer serves as an officer, director, trustee, partner, or employee; or any person or organization with whom the reviewer has a present or anticipated relationship involving employment or financial interest. Similarly, no panel is allowed to involve two reviewers from the same organization or institution.

Despite Department precautions, a conflict of interest may nevertheless occur. If you feel that you have a financial interest in any application in the competition you are responsible for reporting that interest to program office staff. This responsibility is strictly enjoined upon you; an undetected conflict of interest undermines the entire review process.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

You must report a finanical interest to program staff if any application in the competition involves:

1) Yourself;
2) Your spouse;
3) An organization for which you serve as an officer, director, trustee, partner, or employee;
4) A person or organization with which you have present or anticipated employment or financial interest.

The following table summarizes your responsibilities as a reviewer.

REVIEWER RESPONSIBILITIES

1) To provide a specific and well-documented critique of each application.

2) To prepare constructive written comments, instead of offering snide commentary.

3) To evaluate applications independently of personal feelings or knowledge about the applicant.

4) To participate in panel discussion, if required.

5) To maintain confidentiality.

6) To report any conflict of interest.

Conclusion

This module is designed to acquaint you with the broad outline of the review process and your own role. That role is, in general, to provide a cogent analysis of applications that will enable program office staff to fund projects that best address legislated educational priorities. In specific, you will be asked to comment upon and score each application on a Technical Review Form, according to a given set of selection criteria.

A sample illustration of a reviewer's work appears on the page to your right. Here, the reviewer has commented upon and scored an application's response to the Plan of Operation selection criterion. As the sample indicates, you are responsible for analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of an applicant's response to each selection criterion and assigning a numerical score that corresponds to the adequacy of that response. These scores and comments will be used by program office staff to rank the applications.

Therefore, although review involves your personal expertise, it must also be firmly anchored to the selection criteria listed on the Technical Review Form. Most of the criteria you will encounter are explained in the next module and are accompanied by practice exercises.

SAMPLE OF REVIEWER'S WORK ON A TECHNICAL REVIEW FORM

b) PLAN OF OPERATION Maximum 20 points Awarded 9

The application has a plan that:

- Shows quality
- Shows design
- Ensures proper and effective administration
- Describes how objectives relate to purpose
- Presents plans for use of resources and personnel
- Adheres to EEO regulations

Strengths:

The applicant proposes three measurable goals: to decrease the tribal unemployment rate, to place 85 percent of project graduates into jobs, and to increase the number of tribe members in off-reservation jobs (II-16, A1-3). The first four project objectives detail the number Emanons to be trained in each of the project's vocational education areas and provide job projections (Attachment C(2)) to support the training objectives (II-16, B1-4). According to the documentation provided, the objectives seem adequate to accomplish the project's goals. In addition, the plan of operation is designed to ensure that training activities are tailored to the availability of jobs in the area (II-16, B1-4; II-17,C2; II-18, C4). In two of the vocational education areas targeted by the project--electronics assembly and tourism-- the applicant has already arranged for trainee placement (II-17, C2; II-18, C4).

Weaknesses:

The plan of operation proposes four goals. The first three–decreasing unemployment, job placement, and increasing off-reservation employment–are measurable. The fourth goal, however–increasing Emanon self-esteem–is not measurable as stated and the plan of operation suggests no procedure for assessing and monitoring the success of this goal (II-16, A). Since the overall objective of the project is to increase Emanon economic independence, some procedure for measuring self-esteem would be essential for determining whether the project promotes attitudes of self-sufficiency. A second weakness is the absence of any plan to assess student's basic skill levels (II-17, C). Since the project concentrates its efforts in vocational education, its success will depend on how well students are trained. If instruction is not conducted at a skill level appropriate to the students, the trainees will not be equipped to compete for jobs. Third, the time line proposed for accomplishing project activities is not comprehensive or detailed. The number of classroom hours to be offered is noted(II-17, C), but the hours are not justified by any documentation indicating that they are sufficient for the objectives involved. Courses are scheduled to finish by the time job opportunities will be available (II-19, F), but no detailed master schedule is provided for all activities–recruitment, startup, teacher training, instruction, monitoring, evaluation, etc. A comprehensive management plan is not evident.

MODULE II:

Understanding Selection Criteria

Introduction

This module is divided into three sections. The first two, Reading Applications and Analysis of Applications, provide pointers on the physical and mental process of reviewing an application. The third section, Selection Criteria, introduces the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) and includes a subsection on each of the EDGAR selection criteria. Each subsection explains what you should look for when reviewing an application's response to the criterion and provides a practice exercise. The practice exercises are taken from a fictitious application. Although this application is representative of those you will encounter as a reviewer, it should not be used as a standard against which to evaluate other applications.

The purpose of this module is to develop your ability to read and analyze an application. Therefore, the primary emphasis is on the practice exercises. Each practice exercise begins with a passage that responds to the selection criterion being examined. You must read the passage and analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the application's response. Space is provided after the passage for you to list the strengths and weaknesses that you noted while reading. You should list as many strengths and weaknesses as you can, using the review guidelines provided for that criterion. If you can, cite the pages where the strengths and weaknesses appear. For ease of reference, you may wish to remove the selection criteria overview provided at the end of the module and keep it in front of you as you read. The overview lists the review guidelines for each criterion.

Each practice exercise is followed by a master list of strengths and weaknesses. You should review the master list to determine whether you are focusing correctly on the requirements of that selection criterion. You may want to reread the passage if certain strengths and weaknesses on the master list were not apparent to you. The master list is not exhaustive, however; you may have noted other strengths and weaknesses. That is why your role as a reviewer is so important.

Once you have reviewed the master list for an exercise, you can move on to the exercise provided for the next selection criterion. If the exercises seem difficult to complete, you should review the sections on reading and analysis for tips on improving your performance.

A. Reading Applications

Reading an application is an active and selective process. You are reading with a purpose: to extract information from the text. Your goal is to comprehend the text, i.e., to seek information that answers specific questions. As a reviewer, your main question is: Does the application address the selection criteria? Each one of the selection criteria involves a subset of questions that you must ask in order to determine how the application responds to that criterion.

Before you begin your review, you should study the guidelines for reviewing the selection criteria to ensure that you have the right questions in mind. Then, as you read, focus your attention on locating information that relates to those guidelines. This will enable you to skim through nonessential information, increasing both the speed and the efficiency of your reading. You do not need to give equal time to every word; concentrate on key words and phrases that announce relevant information.

Remember to read critically. Trying to memorize points as you go will disrupt your comprehension of the text as a whole. If you think you may forget an important point, jot it down on the Technical Review Form or a piece of paper as you go. You can also use paper clips to mark important passages. You should never write on the application itself, however, since copies may need to be returned to the applicant.

If you have personal concerns or worries, attempt to clear them from your mind so that you can bring your full attention to bear upon the application. Try to minimize external distractions, too: fatigue, hunger, physical discomfort, noise. These factors can impair your ability to concentrate.

READING TIPS

1) Read with a purpose.
2) Focus on information related to the criteria.
3) Skim over nonessential information.
4) Concentrate on key words/phrases.
5) Read critically.
6) Read quickly.
7) Don't try to memorize.
8) Take notes, if necessary.
9) Relax and clear your mind of personal concerns.
10) Minimize distractions.

Before you start your review, you should consider the number of applications you must review and the amount of time allotted for your review. Then decide how much time you can spend on each application. Some applications may require more time, others less; but establishing a maximum review time will ensure that each application receives sufficient attention.

B. Analysis of Applications

As noted, reviewing an application requires you to look for information as you read--information that answers specific questions. When you find that information, however, you must also evaluate it.

Every application will respond to the selection criteria to some degree; your task is first to locate the relevant response and then to analyze the quality of that response. Your analysis should be an objective appraisal that focuses on how well the application responds to the selection criteria.

GUIDELINES FOR ANALYSIS

1) The applicant's intentions must be clear and specific, not obscured by meaningless jargon.

2) The ideas presented must flow logically.

3) The application must provide a complete response to the selection criteria.

4) The activities outlined in the different sections of the application must be consistent with each other.

5) The activities proposed by the applicant must be consistent with current, accepted knowledge and ideas in that field.

C. Selection Criteria

You must read each application and analyze it against a set of announced selection criteria. Each of the criteria must be addressed by the applicant when the application is being prepared.

Programs that have their own published regulations will have a specific set of criteria to be used in the review process. If a program has not published its own regulations, then the selection criteria to be used in reviewing applications are those prescribed by EDGAR. There are seven EDGAR criteria.

EDGAR SELECTION CRITERIA

1) Meeting the Purposes of the Authorizing Statute;
2) Extent of Need for the Project;
3) Plan of Operation;
4) Quality of Key Personnel;
5) Budget and Cost Effectiveness;
6) Evaluation Plan; and
7) Adequacy of Resources.

These seven criteria will be used throughout the remainder of this workbook. Once you understand them, you will know what to look for as you read an application and how to evaluate the information that is provided.

Keep in mind, however, that the program you are reading for may have criteria that differ somewhat from the EDGAR criteria. The program staff will provide you with their appropriate criteria before you begin reading applications. In many cases, the program criteria will address the same issues as the seven generic EDGAR criteria listed above, though the wording will be different. In some cases, the EDGAR criteria will be supplemented by additional criteria that address unique aspects of the particular program.

Regardless of the specific wording of the criteria, however, the process of reviewing the application, analyzing it, and identifying its strengths and weaknesses is the same. Thus, once you have learned how to analyze the seven EDGAR criteria in this workbook, you will be able to analyze any other program-specific criteria.

Each selection criterion is weighted with a point value. EDGAR recommends point values, but each program office has the authority to assign alternative point values through its program-specific regulations. Thus, while EDGAR weights Extent of Need for the Project at 20 points, a program office may decide that Extent of Need is only worth 15 points and assign the additional 5 points to another criterion that it deems more important. The flexibility of point values allows program offices to tailor application review to their current priorities. The Secretary of Education may also assign additional points to an application that meets his own educational priorities as long as the basis for awarding these extra points is noted in the original application announcement. Thus, the purpose of the selection criteria is to ensure that all applications meet certain established standards, while permitting variable point values that will accommodate shifts in educational policy and objectives.

As a reviewer, you are responsible for assessing an application's response to the substantive requirements of each criterion and scoring that response as indicated by the point values noted on the Technical Review Form. Since point values may vary, and program offices may also establish additional selection criteria, you must be sure to study all application review guidelines provided by the program office.

You will find a discussion of each general selection criterion in the sections that follow, as well as practice exercises designed to enhance your reading and analysis skills. An overview at the end of the module recapitulates the review guidelines for each selection criterion. You can remove this overview from the workbook for quick reference while completing the practice exercises.

Criterion: Meeting the Purposes of the Authorizing Statute

Every program is authorized by a statute, and grants are awarded to projects that best carry out the purposes designated in that statute. Applicants should be aware of the statute's purposes, and their applications must demonstrate how their projects will serve those purposes.

When you review an application's response to this criterion, you must ask:

1) What are the purposes of the authorizing statute?

2) What are the objectives of this project?

3) How will these objectives further the purposes of the authorizing statute?

Meeting the Purposes of the Authorizing Statute is the first and broadest criterion you must consider. In most cases, it will not be given a separate evaluation on the Technical Review Form or assigned a point value, but you should keep it in mind as an overall consideration throughout your entire review (particularly when assessing Extent of Need for the Project).

The program office you review for will acquaint you with the purposes of the statute before you begin your review. This criterion is meant to ensure that funding awards are in keeping with legislated educational priorities. Regardless of the quality of its response to the other selection criteria, an application that does not serve the purposes outlined in the authorizing statute should not receive funding.

The following abbreviated version of an authorizing statute's purpose applies to the application passages that form the basis of the exercises provided in this module. Please read it carefully. There is no practice exercise for this criterion, but you should consider the information presented on the next page when completing the practice exercises for the other selection criteria.

Authorizing Statute: The Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984

The statute allocates funding for Indian and Hawaiian Natives projects that target education, medical attention, relief of distress, and social welfare. A certain percentage of these funds must be used to provide vocational education services designed to meet the special needs and enhance the participation of handicapped individuals, disadvantaged individuals, adults in need of training or retraining, single parents or homemakers, and others. The 24 purposes identified by the statute include the following:

1) The advancement of vocational education programs designed to improve the quality of vocational education, including high-technology programs involving an industry-education partnership;

2) The expansion of vocational education activities necessary to meet student needs, and the introduction of new vocational education programs, particularly in economically depressed urban and rural areas;

3) The creation or expansion of programs to train workers in skilled occupations needed to attract or revitalize businesses and industries;

4) The improvement and expansion of postsecondary and adult vocational education programs and related services for out-of-school youth and adults;

5) The acquisition of equipment, including high-technology equipment,and the renovation of facilities necessary to improve or expand vocational education programs;

6) The creation or improvement of placement services for students who have successfully completed vocational education programs; and

7) The provision of vocational education through arrangements with private vocational education institutions and employers, if these can make a significant contribution to project objectives or provide equivalent or superior training not available at a public vocational education institution.

Criterion: Extent of Need for the Project

As noted in Meeting the Purposes of the Authorizing Statute, the statute that authorizes a particular program has certain declared purposes. These purposes derive from perceived educational needs. In order to qualify for funds, an applicant must specify the needs that the proposed project will meet, and those needs must be consistent with the purposes of the program providing the funding.

When you review an application's response to this criterion, you must ask:

1) What needs are outlined by the authorizing statute?

2) What needs does the applicant identify?

3) How did the applicant identify those needs, i.e., what specific documentation or evidence does the application offer to support the applicant's assessment of need?

4) Are the needs identified by the applicant consistent with the purposes of the authorizing statute?

5) Does the applicant identify too many or too few needs for the proposed time frame and resources of the project?

6) Are the outlined needs well defined so that the project can be focused on them, or are the outlined needs very generic?

The exercise on the next page is designed to give you practice in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of an application's response to the Extent of Need for a Project criterion.

EXERCISE: EXTENT OF NEED FOR THE PROJECT

Directions: Read through the following passage* on Extent of Need for the Project. As you read, you should take note of significant strengths and weaknesses and list them in the space provided on II-13. Use the overview at the end of the module to guide your review.

Estimated Reading Time: 5 minutes

The Emanon Tribe has 2,700 people and has lived in the Odega Foothills since the forced resettlement of 1869. Tribal members have lived in poverty for the better part of this century and, until recently, have had few prospects for change. Our need, however, is clear: to end the long cycle of dependency resulting from low income levels and poor living conditions.

A. CURRENT SITUATION

1. Employment and Income

The current unemployment rate for the Emanon Tribe is 69 percent, even though the unemployment rate for the greater Cimmaron Metropolitan Area (CMA), which ends only 20 miles from the reservation, is only 6.3 percent. Not surprisingly, the median income for our 375 tribal families is $4,350, well below both Federal poverty levels and the median CMA income of $16,860. As a result of these factors, Emanon tribal members depend heavily on Federal and State economic aid. Even those who have gotten jobs have usually had to leave the reservation to find them, and then often that income is spent in the city, further draining any economic base in the Foothills.

The long-term future of the Emanons thus rests on the development of jobs and businesses on the reservation.

2. Natural Resources and Development

The Emanon Reservation includes 8,243 acres. Until very recently, this large land area was effectively isolated from the CMA, though only 20 miles away. However, the recent completion of Interstate-72 means a major change. The Interstate has two exits adjacent to the Reservation and runs the entire 6-mile length of the Emanons' land before cutting back northeast and upstate.

In short, the Emanon Reservation and surrounding lands are now poised for major economic development. Construction of homes and shopping areas has already started

* All the passages used for the selection criteria exercises in this module are from a single application. Therefore, you should keep in mind the information already received as you move from exercise to exercise.

north of the CMA and projects have already been initiated within a 10-mile radius of the Reservation. The Emanon Tribal Council has been approached by three developers in the past year, but has been reluctant to make commitments without a fully developed economic plan.

That problem was recently solved with the help of a $125,000 Economic Development Administration (EDA) planning grant. That grant allowed us to develop a Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) for the area.

B. PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

1. The CDP and Vocational Education

The CDP, which was endorsed by the Tribal Council this spring, calls for a gradual but steady development of small businesses and light industry on the 22 percent of Emanon land closest to the Interstate. In addition, the Plan calls for the construction of housing and associated shopping areas west of the economic development. A second EDA grant for $1.4 million was recently awarded for the first phase of business development, the construction of a light industrial park to include printing and electronics assembly plants. These two businesses are growth areas in the greater CMA and are projected to remain so due to development along I-72 (see Attachment A, Emanon Comprehensive Development Plan). In addition, the Tribal Council recently approved a contract with Whitman Construction for a planned community of 100 small, subsidized ranch homes over the next three years. This contract requires that at least 50 percent of construction jobs over that period (estimated at 100 workers) be given to Emanon tribal members, provided they meet minimum training requirements.

A priority of the CDP is assisting tribal members to achieve their individual career goals in "demand" occupations on the reservation and in the surrounding nontribal community. With the help of Cimmaron City University, the Cimmaron Center for Business and Economic Research, and the Cimmaron Private Industry Council, we have focused our proposed education program on occupations that are undersupplied in the area. In choosing nontribal areas of vocational education, we have considered statements of longstanding need and intent to hire. We have targeted three employment areas for our initial development: printing, electronics assembly, and carpentry. Preparation of tribal members for those jobs, however, depends heavily on vocational education. Because job opportunities in these areas are projected to grow over the next 10 years (see the CDP), we believe that giving Emanons job skills in these areas will continue to provide stable employment. However, if our members cannot compete for these jobs, development will continue without the Emanons, leaving us in the poverty that has characterized our existence for four generations.

Our proposed education project will allow us to provide a program uniquely designed to meet the special needs of the Indian community. A reservation-based program for Indians by Indians can serve a number of needs that cannot be filled by other educational institutions or programs that already exist in the Valley area: (1) individual attention, (2) personalized services, (3) a comfortable learning atmosphere, (4) community support, (5) easy access to classes, and (6) placement and other followup services.

2. Nontribal Employment

In addition to the three occupations identified above, we propose to train workers for the growing tourism industry as well. The CMA Development Board has established growth of the Foothills Recreation Area, a 1,015-acre development that extends almost to the start of the Reservation, as a major goal now that I-72 is completed. In conjunction with the Cimmaron Chamber of Commerce, the Board has adopted a plan for employment growth in the Recreation Area. The Emanons' knowledge of the Foothills' history and natural resources gives us an advantage for many of these jobs if we have the skills.

Thus, we see jobs in tourism as a fourth occupational area to target through this project. Such off-reservation jobs will play a major part in building an integrated economic base with the CMA. However, the Emanon people have been unable to obtain or retain such jobs in the past. There has traditionally been a high "dropout" rate for nontribal employment. To some extent, this may be due to Emanons' inability to deal with the white "establishment" and the conflicting norms and practices that face Emanon workers in the predominant culture. These factors must also be addressed in the educational program in order to assure the longrun economic success of the tribe. If we are able to do this, along with the tribal employment gains we foresee, we may be able to break the cycle of poverty that has plagued our people and thus end our dependence on government financial assistance.

MODULE II: Selection Criteria

List the significant strengths and weaknesses of the preceding passage on Extent of Need for the Project in the space provided below. Try to indicate the relevant page number(s) for each.

Strengths	Weaknesses

Compare your list to the list of selected strengths and weaknesses on the next page.

SELECTED STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Strengths	Weaknesses
▪ Applicant provides documented evidence of need to improve employment and income situation. (II-10, A1)	▪ Assessment does not specify the kind and number of jobs to be provided by the project. (II-11 to II-12, B1-2)
▪ The goal of the proposed project is clearly specified. (II-10, A1)	▪ It is unclear what skills the target group lacks that make them unable to find work. (II-11, B1)
▪ The applicant details how the economic plan will improve the tribal situation. (II-10, A-1)	▪ The application lacks specific data indicating the availability of jobs. (II-11 to II-12, B1-2)
▪ The project hopes to make future government assistance unnecessary. (II-12)	▪ Little detail is provided on how the project will move trainees into the work environment. (II-11 to II-12)
▪ Proposed vocational education effort is tied into larger economic development effort. (II-11, B1)	▪ Applicant needs to provide statistics to support claim of high dropout rate for those employed outside the reservation. (II-12)
▪ Education program plans are not focused narrowly on reservation jobs, but address the larger need to equip Indians to work in jobs outside the reservation. (II-11 to II-12)	
▪ Applicant's proposal responds to needs clearly documented by outside institutions. (II-11, B1)	
▪ Finding off-reservation jobs for Emanons is clearly possible. (II-11 to II-12, B1-2)	
▪ Reliance on statements of longstanding need and intent to hire indicates realistic objectives. (II-11, B1)	
▪ Applicant identifies needs that are unique to the target group, although these needs are not very specific or well documented. (II-11, B1)	

Criterion: Plan of Operation

Having outlined the need for a project, the applicant must detail the project's objectives. The applicant must also provide evidence that the project will be efficiently and effectively operated to achieve those objectives.

When you review an application's response to this criterion, you must ask:

1) Do the project objectives serve the purposes of the authorizing statute?

2) How well is the project designed?

   Are project objectives consistent with stated needs?

   Are project activities consistent with project objectives?

   Are project objectives measurable?

3) How will the applicant use its resources and personnel to achieve each objective?

4) Has the applicant developed an effective management plan that will ensure proper and efficient administration of the project?

5) Do project milestones represent a logical progression of times and tasks?

6) Does the applicant propose a realistic time schedule for accomplishing objectives?

7) Will the proposed activities accomplish the project's objectives successfully?

8) Are the educational approaches planned based on sound research that indicates they will be successful for the population to be served?

9) Does the project have clearly developed provisions for providing equal access to eligible participants who are members of traditionally underrepresented groups (racial or ethnic minorities, women, handicapped persons, elderly persons)?

Now work through the exercise on the next page. This next exercise is designed to give you practice in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of an application's response to the Plan of Operation criterion.

EXERCISE: PLAN OF OPERATION

Directions: Read through the following passage on Plan of Operation. As you read, you should take note of significant strengths and weaknesses and list them in the space provided in II-20. Use the overview at the end of the module to guide your review.

Estimated Reading Time: 9 minutes

A. PROJECT GOALS

Our overriding goal is to increase the proportion of economically independent Emanon families. We propose to do this in two ways: tribal and off-reservation employment resulting from a strong program of vocational education.

More specifically, the project has four goals:

1. We will decrease the tribal unemployment rate from 69 percent to 12 percent over the three-year project (see Attachment B for documentation on tribal unemployment figures).

2. We will place 85 percent of our graduates into jobs in their field of training within 3 months of graduation from the program.

3. We will increase the number of Emanons in off-reservation employment.

4. We will increase Emanon self-esteem as a result of job placement and economic development.

B. OBJECTIVES

The project has 5 objectives:

1. To train 20 workers per year for entry-level jobs in commercial printing (see Attachment C(1) for job projections);

2. To train 20 workers per year for entry-level jobs as electronic parts assemblers (see Attachment C(2) for job projections);

3. To train 20 workers per year for entry-level carpentry positions (see Attachment C(3) for job projections and statement by the Cimmaron Federation of Building and Trades Unions);

4. To train 15 workers per year for jobs as tour/travel managers (see Attachment C(4) for job projections); and

5. To provide job readiness training.

C. CURRICULUM

1. Objective #1: To train 20 workers per year for commercial printing jobs.

   Cimmaron Technical College, located 23 miles south on I-72, has a one-year, 30-credit vocational training program that can be adapted to our needs. Discussions with the College indicate that they are willing to modify the program to suit our students. The course of study includes an overview of the commercial printing field and instruction in the four major commercial printing systems commonly used throughout the CMA (the Wainwright X-365, X-470, Z-7200, and the Natuki Master 5000). An internship in a CMA printing facility is included toward the end of the curriculum. Graduates of this program will qualify for the Printing Technician-Level 1 positions anticipated in the Emanon Industrial Park facility under our Comprehensive Development Plan.

2. Objective #2: To train 20 workers per year for electronic parts assembly jobs.

   Foster-Johnson, the largest electronic parts firm in the CMA, has an in-house training program for Parts Assembler positions. The program includes a total of 320 hours of instruction, and Foster-Johnson has agreed to provide a resident instructor in about 4 months. Classes will be held in the Emanon Tribal Hall until the company's new plant opens next year. The project must handle the financial arrangements for the instructor and classroom materials, although Foster-Johnson has agreed to provide all equipment. Graduates of the class will be given entry-level positions when the plant opens (in about 9 months).

3. Objective #3: To train 20 workers per year for carpentry jobs.

   A curriculum for Carpentry Assistant positions has been developed by the Cimmaron Federation of Building and Trades Unions, but staff and facilities to conduct it must be secured. We propose to hire an instructor on a part-time basis for this purpose, and we will construct a small classroom facility near the Tribal Hall. We anticipate that the 400-hour training program can begin within 6 months, producing its first graduates within 11 months. (Construction by the Whitman company is due to begin in 10 months, after site-clearing has been finished.) We anticipate that the curriculum will need some modifications based on our students' current skills, but we are prepared to make them.

4. Objective #4: To train 15 workers per year for jobs as tour/travel managers.

   The curriculum for this course will be developed under the guidance of an advisory group consisting of representatives from the Cimmaron Chamber of Commerce, the Foothills Community College Business Development Program, and the Cimmaron Development Board. Areas of training are expected to include travel management, tour development, small business management, and marketing. Graduates of the program will be eligible for employment under an arrangement between the Cimmaron Development Board, the Tribal Council, and Resorts International, a national tour center chain that recently established a northwest hub in Cimmaron.

5. Objective #5: To provide job readiness training.

   The job readiness program will include an 80-hour course of study for all Emanon project participants. The curriculum will, when completed, cover such areas as human development, employability skills, and job survival skills. The curriculum will be developed and delivered by a counselor employed by the project. Completion of this course will be required before placement in one of the job skill programs described above.

D. STUDENT RECRUITMENT

Students will be recruited throughout the Emanon Reservation using a variety of means including personal contact, the tribal newsletter, and announcements by WKFH, the local radio station. We will also develop a flyer on the project and post it at local businesses and in the Tribal Hall.

E. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Management of the project will be handled by a Project Director, who will be selected by and accountable to the Tribal Council. The Project Director will be in charge of all aspects of the program, including program development, supervision of all staff and instructors, job placement, student recruitment, and fiscal matters. The Director will also be responsible for completing all reports to the U.S. Department of Education and for liaison with local agencies, associations, and employers.

In all cases, the provisions of the Education Department General Administrative Regulations, CFR 34, will be adhered to. Equipment purchased and materials acquired during the project will be solely reserved for project purposes, and inventories will be maintained by the Project Director. A certified public accountant retained by the tribe will audit all records of the project and assure compliance with all Federal audit standards.

A Project Secretary will be hired to provide administrative support for all project activities. In addition, a part-time counselor will be hired to handle the job readiness component and to provide career guidance. Part-time instructors will be hired as described above.

F. TIME FRAME

The five training aspects of the program have been scheduled to coincide with employment opportunities emerging in the area:

1. The job readiness training program will begin in July to assure that participants complete it in time to enter skill training programs.

2. The commercial printing classes will begin in September with the first semester at Cimmaron Technical College. This should allow the first graduates to be ready for the opening of the Emanon Industrial Park facility.

3. The electronic parts assembly training program will begin in the fall as well, also to assure that graduates emerge in time for the opening of the Industrial Park.

4. The carpentry program will begin in February and produce its first graduates next July, shortly after construction begins on the Whitman tract.

5. The tour/travel program will also begin in February. The training schedule for this area should not be a problem, however, as major growth of the Recreation Area is not expected to begin for at least another year.

These dates will be adhered to and made possible by a number of startup activities undertaken early in the project period. The Emanon Tribal Council is strongly committed to this project and will ensure that training programs are not delayed.

List the significant strengths and weaknesses of the preceding passage on Plan of Operation in the space provided below. Try to indicate the relevant page number(s) for each.

Strengths	Weaknesses

Compare your list to the list of selected strengths and weaknesses on II-22.

SELECTED STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Strengths	Weaknesses
▪ Evidence demonstrates that the CDP has been found viable by other grant-making organizations (See Need, II-11, A2)	▪ Not clear how "dropout" rate for off-reservation activities is to be cured by vocational training. How will "dropout" attitude be attacked specifically? (See Need, II-12)
▪ A close relationship between training, availability of jobs in the area, and employer needs is proposed. (II-16, B1-4; II-17, C2; II-18, C4)	▪ First goal seems very optimistic -- can proposed project effect such a drastic reduction in unemployment given the diverse factors that lead to unemployment in this population? (II-16, A1)
▪ The first three goals are measurable. (II-16, A1-3)	▪ Goal 4 is not measurable as stated. (II-16, A4)
▪ Exact number of persons to be trained is given. (II-16, B1-4; II-17 to II-18, C1-4)	▪ Specific objectives for the job readiness component are not clear. (II-16, B5)
▪ The first four objectives are detailed and documented. (II-16, B1-4)	▪ There seems to be no plan to assess the basic skills of the students and to tailor instruction to their skill levels. (II-17 to II-18, C-D)
▪ Training objectives relate to the overall economic plans of the tribe. (II-16, B1-4; II-17, C1)	▪ The educational methodology to be used with adults who have low skill levels and low self-esteem is not clear. (II-17 to II-18, C)
▪ Resources are detailed when necessary. (II-17 to II-18, C1-4)	▪ Recruitment procedures are not specific. (II-18, D)
▪ Responsibilities of key personnel are outlined. (II-18, E)	▪ Selection procedures are not described. (II-18, D)
	▪ Burden of Project Director is too heavy. (II-18, E)
	▪ Claim that accounting and audit system will be satisfactory by Federal standards should be documented. The nature and extent of oversight should be clarified. (II-18, E)
	▪ The time line is very general. Although some details about the number of classroom hours, etc., are given in the plan of operation narrative, it is not clear how all activities will fit together and be managed effectively. (II-19, F)
	▪ Application fails to detail startup activities. (II-18,D; II-19, F)

Criterion: Quality of Key Personnel

Applicants must outline the staff required for the project, identify personnel to fill these staff roles, and detail the relevant qualifications of these personnel.

When you review an application's response to this criterion, you must ask:

1) Do the job descriptions adequately reflect skills needed to make the project work?

2) Are the duties of personnel clearly defined?

3) What relevant qualifications do the proposed personnel possess, especially the Project Director? (Focus on their experience and training in fields related to the objectives of the project, though other information may be considered.)

4) Will proposed personnel need to be trained for the project?

5) How much time will the proposed personnel actually devote to the project?

6) To what extent does the applicant encourage employment applications from members of traditionally underrepresented groups (ethnic or racial minorities, women, handicapped persons, elderly persons)?

Now work through the exercise on the next page. This next exercise is designed to give you practice in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of an application's response to the Quality of Key Personnel criterion.

EXERCISE: QUALITY OF KEY PERSONNEL

Directions: Read through the following passage on Quality of Key Personnel. As you read, you should take note of significant strengths or weaknesses and list them in the space provided on II-25. Use the overview at the end of the module to guide your review.

Estimated Reading Time: 3 minutes

A. Project Director: Annemarie C. Max

Tribal Education Director Annemarie C. Max has served as director of two previous Federal grants (Grant #G000000406 for the Tribe's adult vocational education program and Grant #G0000010312 for the Tribe's adult literacy project). Both projects were funded by the U.S. Department of Education and fully met their original objectives. Reports for both are on file and are summarized in Attachment D. Ms. Max has a B.A. degree in education from the University of Idaho and over 9 years' work experience in tribal and other educational programs. She is a seasoned manager. (See Resumes, Attachment E)

B. Project Secretary: Marlena G. Amberson

Ms. Amberson is a successful graduate of our 1983 vocational education class and has served with the Tribal Council staff ever since. She has performed well and is a dedicated member of the Tribe. (See Resumes, Attachment E)

C. Vocational Counselor: Carla Redbird

Ms. Redbird has a Master of Science degree in educational and vocational counseling, with an emphasis on career guidance. She is a graduate of Cimmaron University and has served as a school counselor for 6 years. She is sensitive to the needs of the Emanons who are the target group for this project, as evidenced by her role as the counselor in our previous adult literacy project. (See Resumes, Attachment E)

List the significant strengths and weaknesses of the preceding passage on Quality of Key Personnel in the space provided below. Try to indicate the relevant page number(s) for each.

Strengths	Weaknesses

Compare your list to the list of selected strengths and weaknesses on the next page.

SELECTED STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Strengths	Weaknesses
▪ Project Director has prior, relevant experience supervising a vocational education program. (II-24, A)	▪ Amount of time personnel will devote to the project is not given. (II-24)
▪ Secretary is a graduate of one of Tribe's previous vocational education programs. (II-24, B)	▪ Job descriptions are not provided. Hard to judge if personnel have the skills necessary to their proposed roles. (II-24)
▪ Counselor has previous experience in educational counseling. (II-24, C)	▪ Other personnel, such as instructors, are not listed. Applicant does not explain how these personnel will be selected or what methods will be used to ensure that chosen instructors are sensitive to the special needs of the Indian population they will teach. (II-24)
▪ Resumes are provided. (Attachment E)	

Criterion: Budget and Cost Effectiveness

Applicants must provide a detailed budget that is adequate to carry out the project as well as cost effective. The budget should indicate how Federal, State, and local funds will be used, in addition to any other funding, and include the proposed salaries of project personnel.

When you review an application's response to this criterion, you must ask:

1) Is the budget adequate to support the project's proposed activities?

2) Are overall project costs reasonable in relation to project objectives?

3) How much of the project's total cost is devoted to administrative costs?

4) Are budget items sufficiently justified?

5) Is the budget padded?

Now work through the exercise on the next page. This next exercise is designed to give you practice in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of an application's response to the the Budget and Cost Effectiveness criterion.

EXERCISE: BUDGET AND COST EFFECTIVENESS

Directions: Read through the following passage on Budget and Cost Effectiveness. As you read, you should take note of significant strengths or weaknesses and list them in the space provided on II-31. Use the overview at the end of the module to guide your review.

Estimated Reading Time: 6 minutes

The budget for each year of the 3-year project, including special one-time startup costs, is shown below:

FIRST-YEAR

A.	PERSONNEL		
1.	Salaries (Full-time staff)		$43,000
	Project Director (12 months)	$33,000	
	Project Secretary (12 months)	$10,000	
2.	Fringe Benefits (@20%)		$ 8,600
	Project Director	$ 6,600	
	Project Secretary	$ 2,000	
3.	Part-time Wages		$42,263
	Counselor: 30 hours for 26 weeks x $15/hr = $11,700 plus 10 hours for 26 weeks = $3,900 plus fringe @ 15% = $2,340	$17,940	
	Instructor--Electronics: 320 hours x $20/hr = $6,400 plus fringe @ 15% = $960	$ 7,360	
	Instructor--Carpentry: 500 hours x $19/hr = $9,500 plus fringe @15% =$1,425	$10,925	
	Instructor--Tour/Travel: 350 hours x $15/hr = $5,250 plus fringe @15% = $788	$ 6,038	

B.	TRAVEL		$12,800
	1. To U.S. Department of Education annual project directors' meeting in Washington, D.C.--for Project Director and counselor	$ 2,800	
	2. Printing Program--travel of students to Cimmaron Technical College--40 weeks x $250 per week for bus/driver	$10,000	
C.	EQUIPMENT (STARTUP)		$12,065
	Wilding Band-Saw	$ 1,250	
	Operman Jig-Saw	$ 895	
	Pownell Hack-Saw	$ 300	
	Emerson Hand-Saws (10 @ $12)	$ 120	
	Hand Tools (hammers, screwdrivers, @ $35 per student)	$ 700	
	Operman C-Lathe	$ 2,850	
	Operman Soldering Irons (20 @ $15)	$ 300	
	Classroom and Office Furniture		
	- File Cabinets (4 @ $200)	$ 800	
	- Student Desks (20 @ 100)	$ 2,000	
	- Teacher Desk (1 @ $150)	$ 150	
	- Utility/Work Tables (5 @ $250)	$ 1,250	
	- VCR for job readiness program, including monitor and camera	$ 1,450	
D.	SUPPLIES		$12,750
	Electronic Parts Program:		
	Textbooks, demonstrators, solder, part assemblies, etc.	$ 3,500	
	Carpentry Program:		
	Wood, nails, screws, paint, finish, etc.	$ 2,750	
	Tools @ $200/Student	$ 4,000	
	Job Readiness Program:		
	Counseling materials, instruments, etc.	$ 1,500	
	Office Supplies	$ 1,000	

E.	CONTRACTS		$59,000
	Tuition to Cimmaron Technical College ($2,700 tuition plus $50 registration plus $200 materials fee per student x 20)		
F.	STUDENT STIPENDS		$138,690
	Commercial Printing: 40 weeks x 30 hours x $3.35 x 20 students	$80,400	
	Electronics: 10 weeks x 32 hrs x $3.35 x 20 students	$21,440	
	Carpentry: 10 weeks x 40 hours x $3.35 x 20 students	$26,800	
	Tour/Travel: 200 hours x $3.35 x 15 students	$10,050	
G.	OTHER		$11,325
	Job Readiness Consultant: 4 sessions of 10 workshops	$ 5,000	
	Local Travel: 1,000 miles @ $ .225	$ 225	
	Student Insurance	$ 2,500	
	Duplicating	$ 1,500	
	Telephone	$ 600	
	Postage/Printing	$ 1,200	
	Office Supplies	$ 300	
H.	TOTAL DIRECT COSTS		$340,493
I.	INDIRECT COSTS (@ 8%)		$ 27,239
	TOTAL PROJECT COST (FIRST YEAR):		$367,732*

* Note to Reviewers: In the interest of brevity, second- and third-year costs have been omitted.

List the significant strengths and weaknesses of the preceding passage on Budget and Cost Effectiveness in the space provided below. Try to indicate the relevant page number(s) for each.

Strengths	Weaknesses

Compare your list to the list of selected strengths and weaknesses on the next page.

SELECTED STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Strengths

- Applicant provides comprehensive cost assessment for all project years. (II-28 to II-30)
- Salaries for Project Director and Secretary seem reasonable. (II-28, A1)

Weaknesses

- Budget offers no narrative justification. For example, are instructor hourly rates at prevailing area wages? (II-28, A3)
- Fringe benefits are not itemized or justified. (II-28, A2)
- Is the counselor's presence at the conference necessary? (II-29, B1)
- Do carpentry students require their own set of tools? Couldn't these be shared by all the classes? (II-29, C)
- Cost of $5,000 for job readiness consultant seems high. (II-30, G)
- No effort seems to have been made to obtain contributions from the Tribe or businesses. (II-28 to II-30)
- Project intends to train 75 students, which makes the project cost per student around $4,900 per year. Amount seems high. (II-30)

Criterion: Evaluation Plan

Applicants must propose a plan to evaluate how well project activities fulfill project objectives. The proposed methods of evaluation should be detailed. Applicants should explain how interim evaluation data will be used to improve project performance and how final evaluation of the project will determine how well project purposes were achieved.

When you review an application's response to this criterion, you must ask:

1) Are the proposed methods of evaluation appropriate to the project?

2) Will the proposed evaluation be objective?

3) Will the proposed evaluation methods measure the effectiveness of project activities in meeting project objectives?

4) Will the evaluation plan produce valid and reliable data concerning the accomplishment of project objectives?

5) Does the evaluation plan measure the project's effect on the project audience?

Now work through the exercise on the next page. This next exercise is designed to give you practice in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of an application's response to the the Evaluation Plan criterion.

EXERCISE: EVALUATION PLAN

Directions: Read through the following passage on Evaluation Plan. As you read, you should take note of significant strengths or weaknesses and list them in the space provided on II-35. Use the overview at the end of the module to guide your review.

Estimated Reading Time: 3 minutes

A. STUDENT LEARNING

The instructor for each vocational program area will administer tests to determine the level of student learning. These tests will be shared with the counselor, who will meet regularly with each student to review progress and provide help. A special instrument will be used to assess the effectiveness of the human development component of the job readiness training.

In addition, the Project Director will monitor weekly class attendance. Needed counseling will be provided.

B. PROCESS DATA FROM INSTRUCTORS

Faculty meetings will be held on a regular basis to review progress and note any special problems that must be addressed. The Project Director and counselor will be present at each meeting. In addition, spot visits to classes will be conducted by the Project Director. (These will be unannounced.)

C. STUDENT COMMENTS

Students will be surveyed using a brief survey form developed and used by the Project Director with good success in an earlier grant project. The form will obtain comments on the program and suggestions for improvement. These will be reviewed by the Project Director and counselor, and needed project changes will be made.

D. PLACEMENT

Placement statistics will be maintained for each class as they finish. In addition, a followup will be conducted with each program graduate to determine employment status and success 6 months after program completion. In addition, we will obtain feedback from employers on project success.

These evaluation activities are the responsibility of the Project Director and will be implemented by her with assistance from the counselor.

List the significant strengths and weaknesses of the preceding passage on Evaluation Plan in the space provided below. Try to indicate the relevant page number(s) for each.

Strengths	Weaknesses

Compare your list to the list of selected strengths and weaknesses on the next page.

SELECTED STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Strengths

- Evaluation procedures include instructor feedback. (II-34, A)
- Evaluation procedures include student feedback. (II-34, C)
- Student survey form was used with prior success. (II-34, C)
- Evaluation plan includes feedback from employers as to effectiveness of activities. (II-34, D)
- Followup evaluation will measure successful accomplishment of objectives. (II-34, D)
- An evaluation instrument is included to measure the effect of the human development component of the job readiness workshops. (II-34, A)

Weaknesses

- Evaluation instruments are not detailed. Who will prepare them? Need more information on the instruments and methods that will be used to measure student progress in the vocational education areas of the project. (II-34, A, C, D)
- No indication of how students will be monitored or how counseling will be coordinated. (II-34, A-B)
- The method and frequency of instructor feedback is not stated. (II-34, A-B)
- Applicant should include a copy of the survey form for review. (II-34, C)
- It is not clear how survey data will be used to improve instruction. (II-34, C)
- The method and frequency of feedback from employers is not clear. (II-34, D)
- Evaluation plan does not explain how placement data will be reported. (II-34, D)
- A majority of the evaluation is ongoing and relies heavily on the subjective assessment of project staff. (II-34, A-C)
- Plan does not indicate how program improvement needs will be identified. (II-34, D)
- No provision is made for outside evaluation to assure the objectivity of internal evaluation. (II-34)
- The reliability and validity of evaluation data is not discussed. (II-34)
- The budget includes no provision for purchasing or scoring evaluation instruments. (II-29, D; II-30, G)

Criterion: Adequacy of Resources

Applicants must identify the facilities, equipment, and supplies they propose to use during the project and show that these are adequate to achieve project objectives. Resources also include involved personnel or any organizations or groups that will contribute to the project.

When you review an application's response to this criterion, you must ask:

1) Are the proposed facilities adequate for project purposes?

2) Is the proposed equipment adequate for project purposes?

3) Does the applicant have access to special sources of experience or expertise?

Now work through the exercise on the next page. This next exercise is designed to give you practice in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of an application's response to the the Adequacy of Resources criterion.

EXERCISE: ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES

Directions: Read through the following passage on Adequacy of Resources. As you read, you should take note of significant strengths or weaknesses and list them in the space provided on II-39. Use the overview at the end of the module to guide your review.

Estimated Reading Time: 3 minutes

A. EXPERIENCE OF KEY STAFF

The Emanon Tribal Council has demonstrated its capability for successful management of Federal education grants on two previous occasions. In addition, the proposed staff have demonstrated their expertise through previous project management and support activities. Still further, the Tribal Council will exercise direct oversight on this project through quarterly reports submitted by the Project Director and the use of its certified public accountant.

B. FACILITIES

The Emanon Tribal Hall has adequate space to house the onsite classrooms, except for the carpentry class. As indicated, this facility will be constructed--at no cost to the project. Project staff will be housed in the Tribal Hall offices and thus have easy access to students and instructors. The Tribal Hall was modified through a previous grant to permit access of handicapped individuals and is within easy commuting distance of prospective students.

All Tribal Hall facilities can be secured and are protected by an alarm system. In addition, an inventory of all project equipment will be maintained.

C. OTHER

As indicated above, some of the instruction will occur at the Cimmaron Technical College, an accredited 2-year institution built in 1985. The college meets all Federal standards for access and has adequate facilities and equipment for the printing curriculum.

The project will be especially advantaged by close cooperation of employers in providing/designing instruction. Foster-Johnson Electronics, Inc., the employer of our electronics assembly graduates, will provide the instructor for the parts assembly program. The instructor for the carpentry program will be a certified union member to assure adequacy of instruction and high job prospects for our graduates. Cimmaron Technical College maintains close contact with area printing firms and thus should have no difficulty arranging for the needed internships. Their curriculum is carefully reviewed on a regular basis by an advisory committee composed of local printing firms.

List the significant strengths and weaknesses of the preceding passage on Adequacy of Resources in the space provided below. Try to indicate the relevant page number(s) for each.

Strengths	Weaknesses

Compare your list to the list of selected strengths and weaknesses on the next page.

SELECTED STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Strengths	Weaknesses
▪ Facilities are within easy commuting distance and equipped for handicapped persons. (II-38, B)	▪ No detail provided on the physical suitability of facilities for work or training. (II-38, B-C)
▪ Equipment and facilities are protected and secure. (II-38, B)	▪ Facility for carpentry classes does not yet exist. (II-38, B)
▪ Employer that will hire electronics assembly trainees will provide the instructor. (II-38, C)	
▪ Available equipment seems adequate for training printers. (II-38, C)	

Conclusion

All programs use these general selection criteria to a greater or lesser degree. Sometimes the criteria will be worded differently. Sometimes a criterion will not appear as a separate unit, but will be subsumed under another. And sometimes, additional selection criteria or narrower interpretations of criteria will be added by a program office through regulation. To avoid any possible confusion or oversight, be sure that you review any program-specific information provided by the program office you will read for.

RULES OF THUMB FOR REVIEW

1) What NEEDS justify the project?

2) Will the project's OBJECTIVES meet these needs?

3) Will the project's ACTIVITIES achieve these objectives?

4) Will EVALUATION measure whether the objectives are in fact accomplished by the activities?

SELECTION CRITERIA OVERVIEW

Meeting the Purposes of the Authorizing Statute

1) What are the purposes of the authorizing statute?

2) What are the objectives of this project?

3) How will these objectives further the purposes of the authorizing statute?

Extent of Need for the Project

1) What needs are outlined by the authorizing statute?

2) What needs does the applicant identify?

3) How did the applicant identify those needs, i.e., what specific documentation or evidence does the application offer to support the applicant's assessment of need?

4) Are the needs identified by the applicant consistent with the purposes of the authorizing statute?

5) Does the applicant identify too many or too few needs for the proposed time frame and resources of the project?

6) Are the outlined needs well defined so that the project can be focused on them, or are the outlined needs very generic?

Plan of Operation

1) Do the project objectives serve the purposes of the authorizing statute?

2) How well is the project designed?

   Are project objectives consistent with stated needs?

   Are project activities consistent with project objectives?

   Are project objectives measurable?

3) How will the applicant use its resources and personnel to achieve each objective?

4) Has the applicant developed an effective management plan that will ensure proper and efficient administration of the project?

5) Do project milestones represent a logical progression of times and tasks?

6) Does the applicant propose a realistic time schedule for accomplishing objectives?

7) Will the proposed activities accomplish the project's objectives successfully?

8) Are the educational approaches planned based on sound research that indicates they will be successful for the population to be served?

9) Does the project have clearly developed provisions for providing equal access to eligible participants who are members of traditionally underrepresented groups (racial or ethnic minorities, women, handicapped persons, elderly persons)?

Quality of Key Personnel

1) Do the job descriptions adequately reflect skills needed to make the project work?

2) Are the duties of personnel clearly defined?

3) What relevant qualifications do the proposed personnel possess, especially the Project Director? (Focus on their experience and training in fields related to the objectives of the project, though other information may be considered.)

4) Will proposed personnel need to be trained for the project?

5) How much time will the proposed personnel actually devote to the project?

6) To what extent does the applicant encourage employment applications from members of traditionally underrepresented groups (ethnic or racial minorities, women, handicapped persons, elderly persons)?

Budget and Cost Effectiveness

1) Is the budget adequate to support the project's proposed activities?

2) Are overall project costs reasonable in relation to project objectives?

3) How much of the project's total cost is devoted to administrative costs?

4) Are budget items sufficiently justified?

5) Is the budget padded?

Evaluation Plan

1) Are the proposed methods of evaluation appropriate to the project?

2) Will the proposed evaluation be objective?

3) Will the proposed evaluation methods measure the effectiveness of project activities in meeting project objectives?

4) Will the evaluation plan produce valid and reliable data concerning the accomplishment of project objectives?

5) Does the evaluation plan measure the project's effect on the project audience?

Adequacy of Resources

1) Are the proposed facilities adequate for project purposes?

2) Is the proposed equipment adequate for project purposes?

3) Does the applicant have access to special sources of experience or expertise?

MODULE III:

Writing Comments, Scoring, and Team Skills

Introduction

This module is divided into four sections. The first section, The Technical Review Form, is an introduction to the Technical Review Form that you will use when you review applications. The next two sections discuss how to write comments and score an application. These sections also provide exercises to sharpen your skills. The last section, Team Skills, examines your responsibilities as a panel reviewer. This section provides tips on active listening and how to become an effective member of the panel team. Practice exercises designed to improve your team skills are included.

This module builds on the analysis skills you learned in Module II, showing you how to turn identified strengths and weaknesses into thoughtful comments and appropriate scores. The lists of selected strengths and weaknesses identified in the sections on selection criteria form the basis of the writing and scoring exercises. Complete these exercises carefully so that you will be prepared to translate your analysis of applications into comments and scores on the Technical Review Form. Merely listing strengths and weaknesses will not constitute acceptable application review.

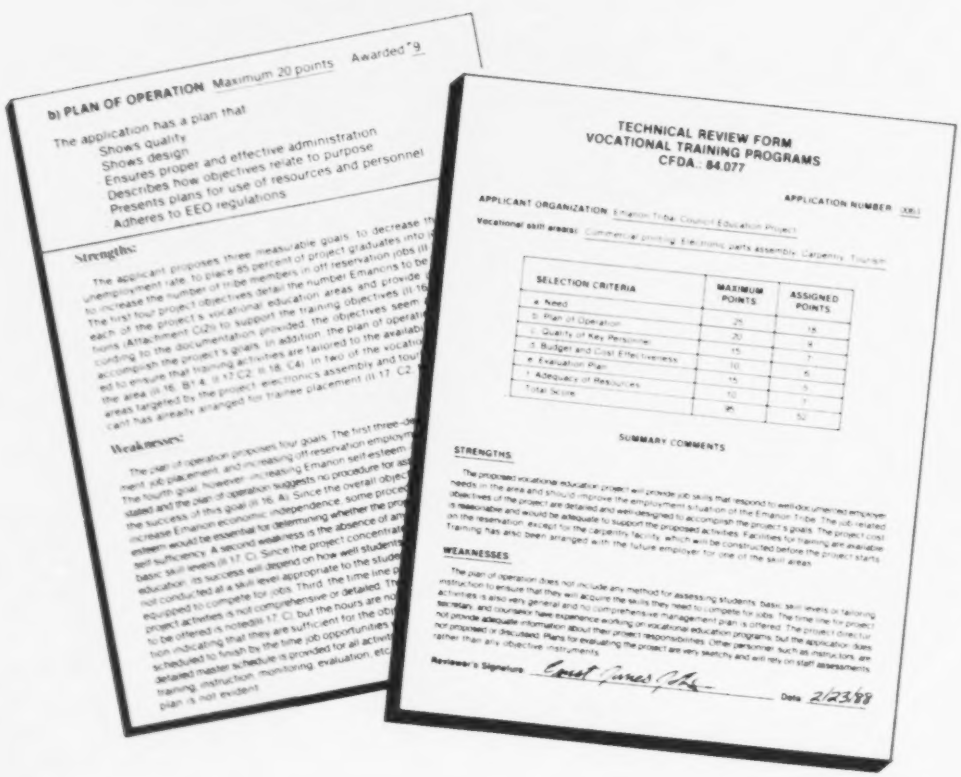
As you may be asked to participate in a panel review, you should also read through the section on team skills. The listening and interpersonal skills that are discussed in this section can be applied to other situations as well, such as orientation sessions or meetings with program staff.

A. The Technical Review Form

As you evaluate an application, you will provide written comments and numerical scores for each of the selection criteria. These comments and scores will be entered on a Technical Review Form that will be provided by the program office. Technical Review Forms will vary slightly from program office to program office, but all are comprised of a summary page and a comment/score sheet for each selection criterion.

The summary page identifies the application under review and the reviewer. It also provides space to list numerical scores for each criterion, compute the final summary score, and write overall comments on the application's strengths and weaknesses. Each comment/score sheet identifies one of the selection criteria and lists relevant considerations for that criterion. Space is then provided for reviewers to comment on the strengths and weaknesses of an application's response to that criterion and to assign a numerical score chosen in consideration of those strengths and weaknesses.

The criteria on the Technical Review Form may be the general EDGAR selection criteria outlined in Module II or modified criteria that reflect the particular emphases of the program office. As a reviewer, you should make sure you understand the selection criteria on the Technical Review Form before you begin your review.



b) PLAN OF OPERATION Maximum 20 points Awarded 9

The application has a plan that

Shows quality
Shows design
Ensures proper and effective administration
Describes how objectives relate to purpose
Presents plans for use of resources and personnel
Adheres to EEO regulations

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

TECHNICAL REVIEW FORM
VOCATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMS
CFDA: 84.077

APPLICANT ORGANIZATION: Sisseton Tribal Council Education Project

APPLICATION NUMBER: XXII

Vocational skill areas: Commercial printing, Electronic parts assembly, Carpentry, Tourism

SELECTION CRITERIA	MAXIMUM POINTS	ASSIGNED POINTS
a. Need	20	18
b. Plan of Operation	25	19
c. Quality of Key Personnel	20	14
d. Budget and Cost Effectiveness	15	7
e. Evaluation Plan	10	5
f. Adequacy of Resources	15	10
Total Score	105	73

SUMMARY COMMENTS

STRENGTHS

WEAKNESSES

Reviewer's Signature: Date 2/23/88

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

B. Writing Comments

Your comments should be based on the strengths and weaknesses of an application's response to the selection criteria. Although you may note a great many strengths and weaknesses as you read, you are not expected to comment on each one. In analyzing an application, certain strengths and weaknesses will seem more significant than others, and your comments should reflect these. You must use your professional judgment in commenting on major strengths and weaknesses, without, however, omitting any that are significant.

When writing comments, be aware that they will be read by program staff as thorough evaluations of an application's response to the selection criteria. Comments should not merely describe what the application says; they must evaluate what is said in a concise and well-digested form. You are not being asked to turn thumbs up or down on the application, but to provide a specific and well-documented summary of the application's strong and weak points. Your comments must be tactful and constructive rather than frivolous or pejorative. Similarly, comments should provide specific information about which elements of the criteria are being considered instead of reiterating the wording of the selection criteria. When you point to a weakness or strength, you must indicate where that weakness or strength is located in the text by citing page numbers so that program staff do not have to search through the entire application.

Be sure to differentiate comments based on fact from those based on professional judgment and to clearly distinguish comments based on lack of information from those based on information included in the application. Finally, write in legible and complete sentences, using proper grammar and spelling.

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING COMMENTS

1) Be specific.
2) Evaluate rather than merely describe.
3) Document your evaluation.
4) Be tactful.
5) Write legibly.
6) Use complete sentences.
7) Use proper grammar and spelling.

PREVIEW EXERCISE

Directions: This exercise provides examples of good and poor comments for the Extent of Need for the Project criterion. Review guidelines for this criterion are given below, followed by a list of selected strengths that form the basis of the comments that follow on the next page. These strengths are drawn from the application passage provided on II-10 to II-12. You may want to reread this passage to refresh your memory. The list of selected strengths is followed by a poor comment that is critiqued to identify its flaws. A good comment follows the critique. Read these comments and study the critique to prepare yourself for writing comments.

Criterion: Extent of Need for the Project

Review Guidelines

1) What needs are outlined by the authorizing statute?

2) What needs does the applicant identify?

3) How did the applicant identify those needs, i.e., what specific documentation or evidence does the application offer to support the applicant's assessment of need?

4) Are the needs identified by the applicant consistent with the purposes of the authorizing statute?

5) Does the applicant identify too many or too few needs for the proposed time frame and resources of the project?

6) Are the outlined needs well defined so that the project can be focused on them, or are the outlined needs very generic?

Selected Strengths

- Applicant provides documented evidence of need to improve employment and income situation. (II-10, A1)

- Proposed vocational education effort is tied into larger economic development effort. (II-11, B1)

- Reliance on statements of longstanding need and intent to hire indicate realistic objectives. (II-11, B1)

On the next page you will find a poor comment followed by a critique and a good comment.

Poor Comment

The applicant plans to reduce high unemployment rates and low income in the tribe through vocational education. Four areas are targeted for project efforts (II-11 to II-12). Objectives are realistic.

Critique

This comment is too general and offers only a description of the applicant's plans. The first sentence does not identify how need for the project is documented by the applicant, nor does it indicate how/how well vocational education will meet that need. The four target areas of the project are not identified and no information is given to indicate how well they respond to the identified need. Although a page reference is provided, program staff should not have to refer to the application for such basic information; page references should indicate particularly significant aspects of the application. Finally, the comment fails to specify the nature and number of proposed objectives or to provide support for their characterization as "realistic."

Good Comment

The applicant proposes to reduce tribal unemployment (currently at 69 percent) and improve tribal income (currently below the Federal poverty level), thereby decreasing tribal dependence on Federal and State economic aid (II-10, A1). The proposed project will promote jobs and businesses on the reservation in accordance with the tribe's Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP). Construction of a new Interstate highway near the reservation makes new economic growth possible (II-10, A2), and the CDP lays the groundwork for future printing and electronics assembly plants, housing, and shopping areas (Attachment A). The proposed project will train tribe members for jobs in printing, electronics assembly, and carpentry. These are and will continue to be "demand" occupations undersupplied in the Cimarron Metropolitan Area and were selected for the vocational education effort based on statements from local employers concerning longstanding need and intent to hire (II-11, B1). A fourth area, tourism, is also targeted by the plan to provide off-reservation jobs in the newly developing Foothills Recreation Area (II-12, B2). Such jobs are expected to integrate the tribe with the CMA economic base. The four areas of effort are realistic avenues to tribal self-sufficiency.

EXERCISE: EXTENT OF NEED FOR THE PROJECT

Directions: Use the selected weaknesses listed below to write a good comment. Document your comment with direct evidence from the passage provided on II-10 to II-12.

Selected Weaknesses

- The application lacks specific data indicating the availability of jobs. (II-11 to II-12, B1-2)
- Little detail is provided on how the project will move trainees into the work environment. (II-11 to II-12)

Comment

Compare your comment to the sample comment provided on II-8. The sample comment is followed by a list of its strong points.

Good Comment

Although the applicant provides a general description of the growing employment opportunities in the area, specific details about the availability of jobs in the area are not given (II-11 to II-12, B1-2). Therefore, it is difficult to assess whether the project's vocational education activities target marketable skills necessary to alleviate the tribe's employment needs (II-10, A1). In addition, the applicant does not explain how the project will place trainees into the work environment (II-11 to II-12). The lack of any such placement plan will detract from the project's ultimate success.

Why this is a good comment:

- Uses proper grammar and spelling.
- Presents weaknesses clearly and concisely.
- Provides page and section citations.
- Explains the significance of each weakness.

PREVIEW EXERCISES

Directions: This example provides examples of good and poor comments for the Plan of Operation criterion. Review guidelines for this criterion are given below. The following page provides a list of selected weaknesses that form the basis of the exercise's sample comments. These weaknesses are drawn from the application passage provided on II-16 to II-19. You may want to reread this passage to refresh your memory. The list of selected weaknesses is followed by a poor comment, that is critiqued to identify its flaws. A good comment follows the critique. Read these comments and study the critique to prepare yourself for writing comments.

Criterion: Plan of Operation

Review Guidelines

1) Do the project objectives serve the purposes of the authorizing statute?

2) How well is the project designed?

   Are project objectives consistent with stated needs?

   Are project activities consistent with project objectives?

   Are project objectives measurable?

3) How will the applicant use its resources and personnel to achieve each objective?

4) Has the applicant developed an effective management plan that will ensure proper and efficient administration of the project?

5) Do project milestones represent a logical progression of times and tasks?

6) Does the applicant propose a realistic time schedule for accomplishing objectives?

7) Will the proposed activities accomplish the project's objectives successfully?

8) Are the educational approaches planned based on sound research that indicates they will be successful for the population to be served?

9) Does the project have clearly developed provisions for providing equal access to eligible participants who are members of traditionally underrepresented groups (racial or ethnic minorities, women, handicapped persons, elderly persons)?

Selected Weaknesses

- Goal 4 is not measurable as stated. (II-16, A4)
- There seems to be no plan to assess the basic skills of the students and to tailor instruction to their skill levels. (II-17 to II-18, C-D)
- The time line is very general. Although some details about the number of classroom hours, etc., are given in the plan of operation narrative, it is not clear how all activities will fit together and be managed effectively. (II-19, F)

On the next page you will find a poor comment followed by a critique and a good comment.

Poor Comment

One goal of the project is not measurable. In addition, the plan of operation makes no provision for assessing the basic skill level of vocational students. The time line for accomplishing objectives is also very general.

Critique

This comment does not offer any specific information or documentation. The first sentence gives no clue as to what the goal is or why it is not measurable. As it stands, it is a statement of opinion rather than an objective analysis. The second sentence makes a valid point, but does not provide any context for understanding the point. This point should be tied to a description of proposed activities and its ramifications in terms of project success should be made clear. Finally, the comment does not indicate what essential information is missing from the time line and why the lack of that information detracts from the proposal.

Good Comment

The plan of operation proposes four goals. The first three--decreasing unemployment, job placement, and increasing off-reservation employment--are measurable. The fourth goal, however--increasing Emanon self-esteem--is not measurable as stated and the plan of operation suggests no procedure for assessing and monitoring the success of this goal (II-16, A). Since the overall objective of the project is to increase Emanon economic independence, some procedure for measuring self-esteem would be essential for determining whether the project promotes attitudes of self-sufficiency. A second weakness is the absence of any plan to assess students' basic skill levels (II-17, C). Since the project concentrates its efforts in vocational education, its success will depend on how well students are trained. If instruction is not conducted at a skill level appropriate to the students, the trainees will not be equipped to compete for jobs. Third, the time line proposed for accomplishing project activities is not comprehensive or detailed. The number of classroom hours to be offered is noted (II-17, C), but the hours are not justified by any documentation indicating that they are sufficient for the objectives involved. Courses are scheduled to finish by the time job opportunities will be available (II-18 to II-19, F), but no detailed master schedule is provided for all activities--recruitment, startup, teacher training, instruction, monitoring, evaluation, etc. A comprehensive management plan is not evident.

EXERCISE: PLAN OF OPERATION

Directions: Use the selected strengths listed below to write a good comment. Document your comment with direct evidence from the passage provided on II-16 to II-19.

Selected Strengths

- A close relationship between training, availability of jobs in the area, and employer needs is proposed. (II-16, B1-4; II-17, C2,;II-18, C4)
- The first three goals are measurable. (II-16, A1-3)
- The first four objectives are detailed and documented. (II-16, B1-4)

Comment

Compare your comment to the sample comment provided on III-14. The sample comment is followed by a list of its strong points.

Good Comment

The applicant proposes three measurable goals: to decrease the tribal unemployment rate, to place 85 percent of project graduates into jobs, and to increase the number of tribe members in off-reservation jobs (II-16, A1-3). The first four project objectives detail the number of Emanons to be trained in each of the project's vocational education areas and provide job projections (Attachment C(2)) to support the training objectives (II-16, B1-4). According to the documentation provided, the objectives seem adequate to accomplish the project's goals. In addition, the plan of operation is designed to ensure that training activities are tailored to the availability of jobs in the area (II-16, B1-4; II-17, C2, C4). In two of the vocational education areas targeted by the project--electronics assembly and tourism--the applicant has already arranged for trainee placement (II-17, C2, C4).

Why this is a good comment:

- Uses proper grammar and spelling.
- Identifies strengths clearly and concisely.
- Provides page and section references.
- Identifies the three measurable goals.
- Notes the specificity of project objectives and cites supporting documentation.
- Relates project objectives to project goals to emphasize their strength.
- Gives specific examples of close relationship between project training and availability of jobs.

ADDITIONAL EXERCISES

Directions: This exercise provides examples of good comments for the four remaining selection criteria: Quality of Key Personnel, Budget and Cost Effectiveness, Evaluation Plan, and Adequacy of Resources. Review guidelines for each criterion are given first, followed by two selected strengths and a good comment, then two selected weaknesses and a good comment. Read these comments carefully, referring to the indicated passages in Module II, to sharpen your sense of what constitutes a good comment. If you want additional practice, try writing comments of your own before reading the comments provided in the text.

Criterion: Quality of Key Personnel (II-24)

Review Guidelines

1) Do the job descriptions adequately reflect skills needed to make the project work?

2) Are the duties of personnel clearly defined?

3) What relevant qualifications do the proposed personnel possess, especially the Project Director? (Focus on their experience and training in fields related to the objectives of the project, though other information may be considered.)

4) Will proposed personnel need to be trained for the project?

5) How much time will the proposed personnel actually devote to the project?

6) To what extent does the applicant encourage employment applications from members of traditionally underrepresented groups (ethnic or racial minorities, women, handicapped persons, elderly persons)?

Selected Strengths

- Project Director has prior, relevant experience supervising a vocational education program. (II-24, A)

- Resumes are provided. (Attachment E)

Good Comment

The Project Director has successfully managed two Federal grants for the tribe before: one in adult vocational education, the other in adult literacy (Attachment D). The Project Director also has a degree in education as well as over 9 years' experience working with tribal and other educational programs. Her resume (Attachment E) provides a detailed summary of her previous activities and indicates that she is seasoned in handling fiscal and management responsibilities and has designed vocational programs that included job placement components. Resumes are also provided for the project secretary and the vocational counselor (Attachment E).

Selected Weaknesses

- Job descriptions are not provided. Hard to judge if personnel have the skills necessary for their proposed roles. (II-24)

- Other personnel, such as instructors, are not listed. Applicant does not explain how these personnel will be selected or what methods will be used to ensure that chosen instructors are sensitive to the special needs of the Indian population they will teach. (II-24)

Good Comment

Although resumes are provided for the three major personnel, the application does not provide job descriptions--other than a title--for their positions. Without knowing exactly what their positions entail, it is difficult to ascertain whether these personnel possess all the skills and experience they will need to manage the project. The application also fails to identify proposed instructors for the vocational education and job readiness classes. Five instructors will be needed, but no description of how they will be selected or what criteria will be used for selection is provided. Given the project's dependence on vocational education for its success, the lack of planning for providing these personnel is a weakness in the project design.

Criterion: Budget and Cost Effectiveness (II-28 to II-30)

Review Guidelines

1) Is the budget adequate to support the project's proposed activities?
2) Are overall project costs reasonable in relation to project objectives?
3) How much of the project's total cost is devoted to administrative costs?
4) Are budget items sufficiently justified?
5) Is the budget padded?

Selected Strengths

- Applicant provides comprehensive cost assessment for all project years. (II-28 to II-30)
- Salaries for Project Director and Secretary seem reasonable. (II-28, A1)

Good Comment

The budget covers all costs, both direct and indirect, for the three years of the project, including startup costs. The Project Director's salary is budgeted at $33,000, which seems very reasonable considering that she will be responsible for managing all aspects of the project (II-18). The Secretary's salary is also very low ($10,000), although it is not clear how much administrative support she will be required to provide.

Selected Weaknesses

- Budget offers no narrative justification. For example, are instructor hourly rates at prevailing area wages? (II-28, A3)
- Cost of $5,000 for job readiness consultant seems high. (II-29, G)

Good Comment

A detailed breakdown of costs is provided for each project year, but there is no narrative justification for the costs that are listed. The application should indicate how these costs were established and explain why each is reasonable. In particular, the cost of $5,000 for the job readiness consultant seems high (II-29, G). Ten workshops are noted, which makes the cost of each workshop $500. It is not clear whether these workshops last one hour or one week. The application should explain how this cost was determined and provide data to show that the price is consistent with current rates of instruction in the area.

Criterion: Evaluation Plan (II-34)

Review Guidelines

1) Are the proposed methods of evaluation appropriate to the project?

2) Will the proposed evaluation be objective?

3) Will the proposed evaluation methods measure the effectiveness of project activities in meeting project objectives?

4) Will the evaluation plan produce valid and reliable data concerning the accomplishment of project objectives?

5) Does the evaluation plan measure the project's effect on the project audience?

Selected Strengths

- Evaluation plan includes feedback from employers as to effectiveness of activities. (II-34, D)

- Followup evaluation will measure successful accomplishment of objectives. (II-34, D)

Good Comment

The project will use feedback from employers who hire project trainees to evaluate the success of the vocational education activities (II-34, D). Details about how feedback will be obtained are not given, but such evaluation does not need to be quantifiable. Informal commentary by employers will alert project personnel to insufficiencies in the training program as well as any shifts in job opportunities. Project activities can be modified accordingly. The project will also conduct followup evaluation of trainees' employment status and success (II-34, D). Followup will indicate whether and how well the project's objectives are being fulfilled.

Selected Weaknesses

- Evaluation instruments are not detailed. Who will prepare them? Need more information on the instruments and methods that will be used to measure student progress in the vocational education areas of the project. (II-34, A, C, D)

- A majority of the evaluation is ongoing and relies heavily on the subjective assessment of project staff. (II-34, A-C)

Good Comment

Although the project intends to use tests to evaluate student progress, these instruments are not described (II-34, A). The usefulness of these evaluation tests will depend on their exact nature. For example, if the instructors prepare their own tests, the results would be more likely to reveal the students' real progress than if other standardized tests are used that measure the students against others nationwide. On the other hand, standardized tests might be better for evaluating students' abilities to compete for and retain jobs after they have been trained. The application should be more specific about the purpose behind evaluations of student progress and indicate exactly how the evaluation will be performed. Similarly, most evaluations of the vocational education component are vaguely ongoing and no schedule other than the label "regular" is identified for the evaluation process. This evaluation is also of questionable utility since it relies almost exclusively on the subjective assessments of project instructors and staff. Some form of objective, ongoing evaluation should be included for balance.

Criterion: Adequacy of Resources (II-38)

Review Guidelines

1) Are the proposed facilities adequate for project purposes?

2) Is the proposed equipment adequate for project purposes?

3) Does the applicant have access to special sources of experience or expertise?

Selected Strengths

- Facilities are within easy commuting distance and equipped for handicapped persons. (II-38, B)

- Employer that will hire electronics assembly trainees will provide the instructor. (II-38, C)

Good Comment

The Tribal Hall is adequate to house all of the necessary classrooms, with the exception of the carpentry class (II-38, B). The Tribal Hall is located on the reservation and will be easily accessible to students. The Tribal Hall is already equipped to permit access of handicapped students. Some printing classes will be held at the local Technical College, which is also equipped for the handicapped. The project also has a significant outside resource in Foster-Johnson Electronics, Inc.--the employer that will hire the electronics assembly trainees--which will provide the instructor for the electronics assembly course (II-38, C).

Selected Weaknesses

- No detail provided on the physical suitability of facilities for work or training. (II-38, B-C)

- Facility for carpentry classes does not yet exist. (II-38, B)

Good Comment

Although the application proposes facilities to house the various vocational education classes, the physical suitability of these facilities is not described. Previous passages in the application indicate that the technical portions of the printing course will be conducted at the facilities of the Cimarron Technical College. The projected carpentry facility is designed for carpentry and should be adequate, but since the facility does not yet exist, its suitability

and even its existence by the time of project startup are questionable. Job readiness classes should not require any special classroom features. However, electronics assembly and tourism classes might require more than just a classroom. The application should identify what is necessary to each class and indicate how these needs will be met.

C. Scoring

The numerical scores you assign to an application's response to the selection criteria must be consistent with the comments you write. Comments and scores should reflect the same overall assessment. You should never attempt to mitigate a negative comment with a positive score, or vice versa.

Comments indicate whether the application's response to the selection criteria is poor, adequate, or good; scores indicate how poor, adequate, or good. If 10 points are possible, 0-2 points is poor, 5-7 points is adequate, and 8-9 points is superior. Four points will indicate a response that is merely weak, whereas 8 points will indicate a response that is above average. Whatever amount of total points is possible, use the midpoint of the scale as adequate and choose your scores accordingly. Do not hesitate to use the full range of points. It is perfectly acceptable to assign a score of 10 or 1, for example. Your guiding rule should be consistency in rating.

Always go back and check your scores to make sure that you have written them correctly and used the appropriate point scale. You should also doublecheck the scores on the summary page of the Technical Review Form to make sure that they match the scores listed under each selection criterion and that the final total has been computed without error.

You may want to use the following table as a guide when assigning points:

Total	Poor	Weak	Adequate	Superior	Outstanding
25	0-8	9-12	13-19	20-23	24-25
20	0-6	7-9	10-15	16-18	19-20
15	0-4	5-7	8-11	12-13	14-15
10	0-2	3-4	5-7	8-9	10
5	0-1	2	3	4	5

DIRECTIONS FOR SCORING EXERCISE 1

The following exercise is designed to give you practice in assigning numerical scores based on selected strengths and weaknesses. Read through the list of strengths and weaknesses and assign an appropriate score in the space provided at the bottom of the page. Remember to distinguish between significant and less significant strengths and weaknesses when assigning your score.

Turn to the next page for Exercise 1.

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EXERCISE 1: EXTENT OF NEED FOR THE PROJECT

Strengths

- Applicant provides documented evidence of need to improve employment and income situation.
- The goal of the proposed project is clearly specified.
- The applicant details how the economic plan will improve the tribal situation.
- The project hopes to make future government assistance unnecessary.
- Proposed vocational education effort is tied into larger economic development effort.
- Education program plans are not focused narrowly on reservation jobs, but address the larger need to equip Indians to work in jobs outside the reservation.
- Applicant's proposal responds to needs clearly documented by outside institutions.
- Finding off-reservation jobs for Emanons is clearly possible.
- Reliance on statements of longstanding need and intent to hire indicates realistic objectives.
- Applicant identifies needs that are unique to the target group, although these needs are not very specific or well documented.

Weaknesses

- Assessment does not specify the kind and number of jobs to be provided by the project.
- It is unclear what skills the target group lacks that make them unable to find work.
- The application lacks specific data indicating the availability of jobs.
- Little detail is provided on how the project will move trainees into the work environment.
- Applicant needs to provide statistics to support claim of high dropout rate for those employed outside the reservation.

How many points would you give?

Maximum 25 points Awarded _____

Compare your score to the score given on the next page and read the discussion of why it was chosen.

MODULE III: Scoring

This section should receive a score of approximately 18 points.

DISCUSSION

The applicant specifies the need for the project and provides documented evidence of that need. The applicant also indicates that the project is part of a larger economic development effort and offers some proof that the project will be able to meet the tribe's need successfully by providing job skills sought after by local employers.

The applicant does not, however, offer enough specific data on how many jobs will be provided or on the availability of employment. Similarly, no data on tribal members' lack of skills is given, making it difficult to determine whether the vocational education effort is appropriate for them. The applicant also assumes that trainees will find employment without explaining how placement is to be conducted.

Thus, although the application adequately describes an evident need and a plan to resolve that need, it needs to detail how the two are related. The weaknesses suggest that the applicant has not analyzed the situation in depth. Therefore, the response is adequate but not superior.

DIRECTIONS FOR SCORING EXERCISE 2

The exercise on the next page provides another list of selected strengths and weaknesses for a different selection criteria. Read the list and assign an appropriate score in the space provided at the bottom of the page. Remember to distinguish between significant and less significant strengths and weaknesses when assigning your score.

Turn to the next page for Exercise 2.

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EXERCISE 2: PLAN OF OPERATION

Strengths

- Evidence demonstrates that the CDP has been found viable by other grant-making organizations.
- Close relationship between training and availability of jobs in the area, employer needs, is proposed.
- First three goals are measurable.
- Exact number of persons to be trained is given.
- The first four objectives are detailed and documented.
- Training objectives relate to overall economic plans of the tribe.
- Resources are detailed when necessary.
- Responsibilities of key personnel are outlined.

Weaknesses

- Not clear how "dropout" rate for off-reservation activities is to be cured by vocational training. How will "dropout" attitude be attacked specifically?
- First goal seems very optimistic -- can proposed project effect such a drastic reduction in unemployment given the diverse factors that lead to unemployment in this population?
- Goal 4 is not measurable as stated.
- Specific objectives for the job readiness component are not clear.
- There seems to be no plan to assess the basic skills of the students and to tailor instruction to their skill levels.
- The educational methodology to be used with adults who have low skill levels and low self-esteem is not clear.
- Recruitment procedures are not specific.
- Selection procedures are not described.
- Burden of Project Director is too heavy.
- Claim that accounting and audit system will be satisfactory by Federal standards should be documented. The nature and extent of oversight should be clarified.
- The time line is very general. Although some details about the number of classroom hours, etc., are given in the plan of operation narrative, it is not clear how all activities will fit together and be managed effectively.
- Application fails to detail startup activities.

How many points would you give?

Maximum 20 points Awarded _____

Compare your score to the score given on III-30 and read the discussion of why it was chosen.

MODULE III: Scoring

This section should receive a score of approximately 9 points.

DISCUSSION

Most of the applicant's goals and objectives seem well designed to meet the outlined need. Four of the objectives are detailed and related to the tribe's economic plan. Resources for conducting training are delineated and the responsibilities of key project personnel are outlined.

On the other hand, the fourth goal is not measurable and the fifth objective is unclear. Little information is provided on educational methodology, recruitment, and selection of students. The activities to be performed are only vaguely described and no schedule of activities is provided. Fiscal procedures are not detailed and the responsibilities of the Project Director are too heavy.

The applicant thus presents only a very general plan of operation. A comprehensive and coherent management plan is not provided, which suggests that the applicant is not adequately prepared to deal with the practical aspects of implementing the project, much less any unforeseen complications. Therefore, the response is not adequate, despite what appear to be reasonable goals and objectives.

DIRECTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL SCORING EXERCISES

The next four pages provide lists of strengths and weaknesses for the following selection criteria: Quality of Key Personnel, Budget and Cost Effectiveness, Evaluation Plan, Adequacy of Resources. Practice scoring by reading these lists and assigning what you feel is an appropriate score in the space provided. You can then compare your scores to those listed in the answer key on II-36.

Turn to the next page for additional exercises.

EXERCISE 3: QUALITY OF KEY PERSONNEL

Strengths

- Project Director has prior, relevant experience supervising a vocational education program.
- Secretary is a graduate of one of Tribe's previous vocational education programs.
- Counselor has previous experience in educational counseling.
- Resumes are provided.

Weaknesses

- Amount of time personnel will devote to the project is not given.
- Job descriptions are not provided. Hard to judge if personnel have the skills necessary to their proposed roles.
- Other personnel, such as instructors, are not listed. Applicant does not explain how these personnel will be selected or what methods will be used to ensure that chosen instructors are sensitive to the special needs of the Indian population they will teach.

How many points would you give?

Maximum 15 points Awarded _____

EXERCISE 4: BUDGET AND COST EFFECTIVENESS

Strengths

- Applicant provides comprehensive cost assessment for all project years.
- Salaries for Project Director and Secretary seem reasonable.

Weaknesses

- Budget offers no narrative justification.
- Fringe benefits are not itemized or justified.
- Is the counselor's presence at the conference necessary?
- Do carpentry students require their own set of tools? Couldn't these be shared by all the classes?
- Cost of $5,000 for job readiness consultant seems high.
- No effort seems to have been made to obtain contributions from the Tribe or businesses.
- Project intends to train 75 students, which makes the project cost per student around $4,900 year. Amount seems high.

How many points would you give?

Maximum 10 points Awarded _____

EXERCISE 5: EVALUATION PLAN

Strengths

- Evaluation procedures include instructor feedback.
- Evaluation procedures include student feedback.
- Student survey form was used with prior success.
- Evaluation plan includes feedback from employers as to effectiveness of activities.
- Followup evaluation will measure successful accomplishment of objectives.
- An evaluation instrument is included to measure the effect of the human development component of the job readiness workshops.

Weaknesses

- Evaluation instruments are not detailed. Who will prepare them? Will they be standardized tests or tests prepared by the instructor?
- No indication of how students will be monitored or how counseling will be coordinated.
- Need more information on the instruments and methods that will be used to measure student progress in the vocational education areas of the project.
- The method and frequency of instructor feedback is not stated.
- Applicant should include a copy of the survey form for review.
- It is not clear how survey data will be used to improve instruction.
- The method and frequency of feedback from employers is not clear.
- Evaluation plan does not explain how placement data will be reported.
- A majority of the evaluation is ongoing and relies heavily on the subjective assessment of project staff.
- Plan does not indicate how program improvement needs will be identified.
- No provision is made for outside evaluation to assure the objectivity of internal evaluation.
- The reliability and validity of evaluation data is not discussed.
- The budget includes no provision for purchasing or scoring evaluation instruments.

How many points would you give?

Maximum 15 points Awarded _____

EXERCISE 6: ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES

Strengths

- Facilities are within easy commuting distance and equipped for handicapped persons.
- Equipment and facilities are protected and secure.
- Employer that will hire electronic assembly trainees will provide the curriculum.
- Available equipment seems adequate for training printers.

Weaknesses

- No detail provided on the physical suitability of facilities for work or training.
- Facility for carpentry classes does not yet exist.

How many points would you give?

Maximum 10 points Awarded_____

ANSWER KEY FOR EXERCISES 3-6		
Exercise 3:	Quality of Key Personnel	**7 points**
Exercise 4:	Budget and Cost Effectiveness	**6 points**
Exercise 5:	Evaluation Plan	**5 points**
Exercise 6:	Adequacy of Resources	**7 points**

D. Team Skills

You may be asked to participate in a panel discussion, which will supplement your individual review. The purpose of panel discussion is not to present just your own assessment, but to provide a constructive airing of all views that will ensure a thorough assessment of an application. You should approach panel discussion as a team effort to clarify individual evaluations, misunderstandings, and questions. You should not attempt to convince other panel members that their assessments are wrong, although panel members are allowed to alter their original evaluations if they feel, based on the panel discussion, that these are incorrect. You are responsible for presenting your views objectively and considering the views of other panel members.

Active Listening

As a panel member, you are expected to participate in discussion. But the quality of your input will depend to a large extent on your listening skills. Just as you must actively read applications in order to provide a valuable assessment, you must actively listen to the points raised during panel discussion in order to provide useful responses. You cannot rebut an erroneous statement, reinforce a particular point, or supply significant information that has been overlooked if you are not paying attention to what is being said.

Your listening skills must be comprehensive. Comprehensive listening involves concentrating on understanding what is said. The active listener will distinguish between factual information, information based on interpretations of data, and generally unfounded opinions or bias. As a panelist, you must be alert to statements that are not based on information included in the application but on professional judgment and give them their appropriate weight. If you sense an unwarranted bias, you must respond by tactfully pointing out the unsupported bias. Your concern and responsibility is to ensure that the discussion is objective and presents the whole picture. Because you have already reviewed the applications under discussion, you must listen critically to the statements of other panel members rather than accepting or rejecting them out of hand because they happen to support or contradict your own impressions. If your assessment of an application is not shared by other panel members, you are obligated both to present your own view and to reconsider your view in light of what other panel members present.

As with active reading, active listening may be impaired by certain internal or external distractions: noise, physical discomfort (hunger, pain, fatigue), emotional states (boredom, anger, preoccupation with personal problems), and simultaneous physical activity (tapping a pencil, playing with a paper clip). You should be alert to these distractions and make an effort to minimize their effect on your listening ability.

One critical skill in active listening is paraphrasing. This involves listening carefully to what someone else has said and then translating this into your own words and repeating it before you add your own thoughts. As an example, consider the following:

Panelist A: "I gave a high score on the evaluation criterion, because they plan to use a variety of instruments to get feedback from students and employers. A lot of projects never get employer feedback."

Panelist B: "If I understand you, you believe that the evaluation plan is strong because it will gather data from students and employers. While that is a strength, I am concerned that these instruments were not described or provided in the application. That lack of specificity is a significant weakness to me."

Paraphrasing is a useful skill for three reasons. First, in order to paraphrase, you have to concentrate on what the other person is saying. That concentration makes sure you truly "hear" another's arguments, instead of formulating what you are going to say while someone else is talking. Second, if your paraphrasing is inaccurate, others will be able to correct you so that you do not proceed with the wrong impression of what took place. And third, when you paraphrase, you show concern for other people and their points of view. When others see you trying to restate their points, they may do the same. This creates a good team atmosphere that is conducive to the panel process.

LISTENING TIPS

1) Focus on understanding what is being said.
2) Paraphrase what the previous panelist said before stating your views.
3) Make a critical evaluation of what is being said.
4) Be receptive to opposing viewpoints.
5) Reduce noise and physical discomfort.
6) Put your emotions aside.

Team-Building Tips

There are several things you can do to help keep your panel working smoothly and efficiently:

1) Suggest that your panel decide on an agenda and approach at the start so that it will manage its work and time better.

2) Pay attention to time and bring up the agenda if the panel gets off track or falls behind.

3) Ask others to explain their positions.

4) Present your own ideas.

5) Summarize the panel's progress periodically, noting points still to be resolved concerning a specific application as well as the number of applications still to be discussed.

6) Participate actively in the discussion, using supporting evidence for your points.

7) Answer other panelists' questions and challenges seriously and diplomatically.

Remember to be patient, courteous, and tactful toward other panel members. Think of the panel as a team that must pull together.

EXERCISE: TEAM BUILDING

Directions: The following exercise presents situations that might arise during panel discussion. Read the description of each situation carefully and consider how best to handle it. Note your suggestions in the space provided.

SITUATION 1

There are three people on your panel, but one of them has not participated in the discussion at all. You have asked the silent panelist for his opinion twice, but the panelist merely asserted agreement with what was being said.

How could you involve the silent panelist?

SITUATION 2

A member of your panel frequently interrupts other panelists with long, seemingly unfounded comments that do not address the issues under discussion. Another panel member reacts to one such interruption by remarking that there's no use in even trying to make a point.

How could you improve this unproductive situation?

SITUATION 3

A fellow panel member refuses to move on to another topic. He seems determined to have his position accepted by the other panelists and continues to demand and then criticize their differing opinions.

How could you settle the issue?

SITUATION 4

One panel member is very witty and has created an atmosphere of frivolity that has the other panel members joking about the application and telling marginally relevant anecdotes.

How could you place the discussion on a more serious footing?

Turn to the next page for a list of possible approaches to improving these situations.

POSSIBLE APPROACHES

SITUATION 1

You could ask the silent panelist to open the discussion of the next selection criterion. You could also try asking the silent panelist for his/her opinion about another panelist's remarks. If the silent panelist merely agrees again, question one of the other panelist's points and request clarification from the silent panelist.

SITUATION 2

This troublesome panelist clearly likes to talk, but doesn't listen carefully to the discussion. To smooth over this moment of tension, you could quickly pick up the point introduced by the affronted panelist and ask the troublesome panelist to clarify the point for your benefit. Or you might restate the affronted panelist's point yourself and ask the troublesome panelist to comment on it directly.

SITUATION 3

If you are very tactful, you could remind the entire panel that panel discussion is not meant to produce a consensus of opinion. You could also suggest that everyone agree to disagree. Another strategy would be to acknowledge the conviction of the stubborn panelist and introduce another issue as one you feel strongly about.

SITUATION 4

You could broach a serious topic and ask the witty panelist for his/her opinion. If the witty panelist responds with another anecdote, you could admit to not understanding his/her point and ask for straightforward clarification. You could also follow an anecdote with the suggestion that "we" should get back to main issue. A reminder that available time for the review is limited might be sobering too.

Conclusion

Congratulations! You have now finished the last module of the workbook on grant application review. If you read the material and completed some or all of the exercises, you should feel comfortable with your role as a reviewer and confident of your ability to review grant applications. But before you put the workbook away, review your original objectives.

Do you understand:

- The review process and your responsibilities as a reviewer?
- The roles of other review personnel?

Can you:

- Read and analyze applications efficiently?
- Apply selection criteria?
- Write detailed comments?
- Score applications correctly?
- Serve on a panel?

If you are unsure about any of the above, go back and review the relevant sections of the workbook. When you feel that you have accomplished all the above objectives, you will be ready for the challenge and responsibility of application review. Then you can put the workbook away--but remember to keep it for future reference.

Thank you for all your effort.

GLOSSARY

Cooperative Agreements: Grants in which the awarding agency has substantial involvement in administering project activities and supervising their outcome.

Discretionary Grants: Grants awarded at the discretion of a Federal administrator, subject to conditions specified by legislation.

EDGAR: The Education Department General Administrative Regulations. A handbook that details the regulations (34 CFR; Parts 74-79) governing Department of Education activities.

Grants Officer: A member of the staff of the Grants and Contracts Service office who may conduct orientation sessions for reviewers and act as an adviser during panel discussion. The Grants Officer can answer questions concerning grants management policy, the provisions of EDGAR, conflict of interest, and confidentiality and is responsible for the negotiation, award, and administration of grants.

Panel: A group of two or more reviewers convened to discuss applications. A panel can be either the regular review method for a group of applications or an adjunct to individual reviews. The purpose of a panel is to ensure thorough consideration of each application. Panels may include Department of Education officials, who act as advisers or facilitators.

Panel Manager/Chairperson: A Department of Education official responsible for panel logistics and facilitation. This official provides information on procedural and administrative matters.

Program: An area of educational emphasis within the Department of Education. Programs administer the award of Federal funds to projects that meet legislated educational objectives.

Program Officer: A member of the professional staff of a Department of Education program. This official acts as an adviser on program policy during panel reviews and may act as Panel Manager. The Program Officer checks completed Technical Review Forms for adequacy and accuracy and also uses reviewers' evaluations to prepare summary funding recommendations.

Project: A term denoting the proposed set of activities or scope of work for which an application for funding is made to the Department.

Reviewers: Persons selected by the Department of Education to read and evaluate applications for funding.

Selection Criteria: The evaluation standards that applicants must respond to and reviewers must apply in assessing grant applications. Seven general selection criteria are listed in EDGAR (Meeting the Purposes of the Authorizing Statute, Extent of Need for the Project, Quality of Key Personnel, Budget and Cost Effectiveness, Evaluation Plan, Adequacy of Resources), but programs often have slightly different or additional criteria that reflect their particular concerns.

Technical Review Form: The official document that reviewers complete when evaluating applications.

ED/OM91-6 *U.S. Government Printing Office: 1995 - 680-487